

ALONG THE WAY

CARRIE MUNSON HOOPLE



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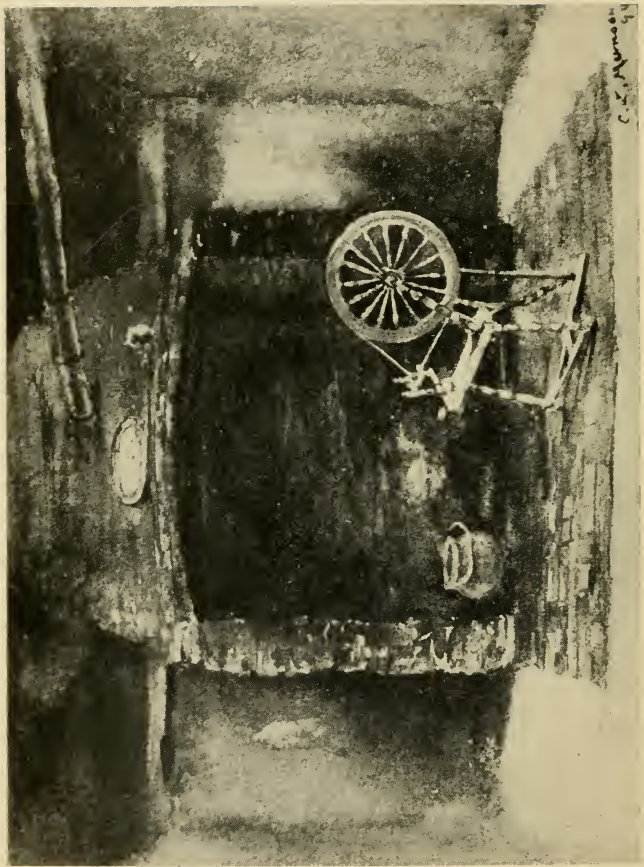
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ALONG THE WAY
WITH PEN AND PENCIL



A BIT OF OLD COBOURG

C. E. Munn
44

ALONG THE WAY WITH PEN AND PENCIL

BY

CARRIE MUNSON HOOPLE



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TO
MY CHILDREN

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FOREWORD

I CANNOT sing of written things,
Mine is not knowledge conned from books;
How is it the bird of the meadow sings?
What is the music we hear in brooks?

There is a gift that is given to man,
Given to him who looks and hears.
He must forth tell it as well as he can,
Just as of old did the ancient seers.

So in small measure, whatever I find,
Secret of nature unfolded to me.
Treasure of happiness, visions of mind,
Humbly I offer them all up to thee.

ALONG THE WAY

A COMMON DISH.

'TIS of a very common dish,
 A well known one, I'd sing,
 The same unto the pauper
 As it is unto the king;
 Known throughout the ages,
 Since first the world began,
 Food for modern people,
 And for pre-historic man.
 I fancy at creation,
 That the pot was set to boil,
 Ever-giving, ever filling,
 Like the widow's cruse of oil.
 The elements within it,
 Are made up, I opine,
 Of a nature part Satanic
 And a nature part Divine.
 Stirred by Fate, or Chance, or Fortune,
 Or whatever we may call
 That unknown mysterious power
 Which doth ladle it to all.
 For a share of it is given
 At the moment of his birth,
 Spiced with hereditary flavoring
 To each soul upon the earth.

But alas ! Sometimes the atoms
 Not being mixed so very fine,
Some get more of the Satanic
 Than they get of the Divine.
'Tis called "Human Nature,"
 The dish of which I sing,
The same unto the pauper
 As it is unto the king.

"NO RESPECTS."

SHE was the little serving maid
 And he the grocer's man,
 I really couldn't tell you
 Just how it all began.

It wasn't for her beauty
 That he loved her, I am sure
 For I never saw a maiden
 Quite as plain as Ann McClure.

Nor it wasn't for her neatness
 Nor her brilliant shining tins,
 For that maid's untidy habits
 Were among her greatest sins.

Nor it wasn't for her smartness
 For she was as slow as time
 If we ordered lunch for twelve,
 We were called as two would chime.

She was, to word it mildly,
 Just a bundle of defects,
 But you know as Shakespeare puts it,
 "Love knows no respects."

I often used to wonder,
What in Ann he saw to like;
But I wondered still more often
What on earth she saw in Mike.

Of all the homely Jehus
That drive a butcher's cart,
The homeliest was Mike Gilroy,
Who won our Annie's heart.

His hair stood up in bristles,
One eye looked up, one down,
His complexion like the roadway,
On a muddy day downtown.

And he had a sort of general
Melancholy air
That gave him the most horrible
Expression of despair.

But the men that women marry
Are not what one expects,
For you know, as Shakespeare puts it,
"Love knows no respects."

AT THE FEAST.

THE guests are come, the feast is spread,
 Gay revelry doth claim the hour;
 Soft lights around their lustre shed

And music wields its magic power.
 But seemeth it at second glance
 The merriment appeareth forced,
 Though loudly rings the laugh perchance
 And brightest are the strains discoursed.

Who is the chosen guest tonight—

The one for whom the feast is made?
 Behold him there so rich bedight!

What deference to him is paid!
 Behold him in the honored place!

But, do you mark how still he sits?
 No muscle changes in his face,

No answering smile across it flits
 How fixed his eye! He wears a mask?

Earth's revelry for him hath ceased.

You know him now, no need to ask
 "The Death's Head at the Feast."

An ancient Scythian custom this,

Unknown to us, that way at least;
 Though still we entertain, I wis,

Our death's heads at the feast.

MY GIRL.

STATELY as a Calla Lily,
Sweet as any Rose,
Fresh as is a Daffodilly,
In the Spring that blows.
That is she.

Would you know her?

Would you see her?

Would you touch her hand?

Would you in her presence
Like a sun-kissed rose expand?

Then among the highways
And the byways you must wind
That, surely lead unto her
Enthroned in my mind.

And all the time I think of her
I cannot help but feel

That another maid will catch me
Not a bit like my ideal.

For I'm poor and she has money,
And I can't afford to wait.

But I wonder if we'll meet
When perchance 'twill be too late.

THE NOTICE COLUMN.

‘ ‘**B**IRTHS” and “Marriages,”
 “Deaths” and “Amusements”—
 So read the lines from day to day,
 But who shall decipher
 The lines of living
 That all unnoticed between them play?
 There was Jim: he was born
 Like every other
 An heir to a portion of God’s fair earth,
 Knocked about and beaten,
 Starved and abused,
 Almost from the day of his birth.
 ’Tis a wonder he lived.
 But he did
 And thrived, and married too.
 He was sent to gaol,
 And staid for a week.
 They said he stole, but it wasn’t true.
 In gaol for a week!
 Amid the essence
 Of crime and sin from all the land,
 He went in pure,
 But he came out versed
 In many a craft of that hardened band.

He tried to get work—

Just enough to buy bread

To keep the breath in himself and wife,

But work is scanty for such as he;

“Gaol-bird” followed him all through life.

Were it any wonder

He’d put in practise

What he’d learned in gaol (how to snatch a purse)?

Driven by man’s

Self-righteous justice

To do that, aye, and a great deal worse!

Just to be born!

Perhaps to be married!

To be amused, and then to die.

But who shall decipher

The lines in the column

That all unnoticed between them lie?

THE OLD CRADLE.

THERE'S nothing grand about it,
Just plain, old solid, oak.
But it has a sort of elegance
That somehow makes me choke.

No muslin frills nor fancies,
Nor fripperies of lace
Such as Hiram's wife has dangling
Above her baby's face.

But 'tis decked and ornamented
Plenty good enough for me.
For around it like a trimming
Hangs a fringe of memory.

And I can't help thinking
As I see it idling there,
Of the busy days it used to have
Its resting spells were rare.

For there were a good many of us
Rocked in it all told,
Lil, and Sue, and Benny,
Our soldier brave and bold.

Bess, our blue-eyed beauty,
Then, forsooth, came I.
And if I were as restless as I am now,
I needed many a lullaby.

One day I remember
When the cradle stood quite still.
In it like a waxen doll
Lay little baby Bill.

I poked him with my finger,
And asked them "If he slept."
Mother moaned, "He's gone to heaven."
Then I asked her why she wept.

For I said, "You always told us
Heaven was a lovely place."
She smiled a sort of dreary smile
And tried to dry her face.

And I could not help thinking
Young as I was then,
That folks tell tales to little boys,
They might not tell to men.

Another time I think of,
When the last babe came along,
Mother sent me in to rock it,
And soothe it with a song.

I had set my heart on fishing,
My "Chum" was at the door,
And my too eager efforts,
Rocked the baby on the floor.

Oh dear! The tender memories
About that oaken thing!
All the sweet, wild dreams of childhood,
Drawn about it like a string

Of pearls, that broke and scattered
When the world's enlightening beams
Showed me knowledge for my visions,
Gave me facts instead of dreams.

THE WORLD OWES ME A LIVING.

THE world owes me a living,"
The poor man said.
"It owes me at least
My daily bread.
And I would not object
To some butter too,
Why should the many
Have less than the few?"
The demagogue smiled
As he heard him speak,
And started a strike
That very week.
For the demagogue
Lives on the poor man's gains,
While the poor man's family
Starves for his pains.
And the wise old world
Jogs round the sun
Paying attention
To neither one.
Doing the work
It is meant to do.
But there's something wrong somewhere
I think, don't you?

“The world owes me a living,”
The rich man said.
“It owes me more
Than my daily bread.
It owes me of life
“The sugar and spice,”
And, as the rhyme says,
“All things nice.”
For why should any
Have more than I?
To beat them all
I’m going to try.”
The demagogue smiled
As he heard him speak
And went on with the strike
He started that week.
While the wise old world
Jogged round the sun
Paying attention
To neither one,
Doing the work
It was meant to do.
But there’s something wrong somewhere,
I think, don’t you?

Supposing the world
Should stop and say
“There’s another planet
That goes my way

Has more circumference
 Than I,
To take its place
 I'm going to try.
The universe owes me
 A wider groove
And so on my axis
 I'll cease to move."
I wonder what
 Would the universe do?
There'd be something wrong somewhere,
 I think, don't you?

CHERRY STONES.

RICH man, poor man, beggar man, thief,
Merchant, tailor, doctor, chief,' "
So sang a maiden to tell her fate
Counting the cherry stones on her plate.
" 'Rich man, poor man,' Ah, no," she said,
"The man must be rich whom I'm to wed—
Must have his carriage and money a pile,
For love in a cottage is not my style."
Then she ran away with a young bank clerk,
With six hundred a year, (complexion dark).
So maidens, beware how you scorn your fate
Counting the cherry stones on your plate.
" 'Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief,
Merchant, tailor, doctor, chief.' "

A WHOLE SOUL.

HE was a little fellow,
Five feet and an inch or so,
The reason he wasn't taller
He used to tell us
Was because he didn't grow.
He had acquired a habit,
Which is rather rare, forsooth,
(At least in these days,
Seems to have grown old-fashioned)
Of always telling the truth.
He hadn't much to live on,
The best men seldom do;
But what little that he did have
(He wasn't stingy with the Lord)
Was divided up in two.
We all confided in him,
From the old down to the young;
And, as you will notice
In such cases, about himself,
He held his tongue.
The children used to smile at him,
Halfway down the street,
The very busiest people
Had time to talk
When they would meet.

And because he was so kindly
And followed the Golden Rule
They called him just "the least bit soft."
I think an angel in our midst
We'd likely dub a "Fool."

Well he died, of course, quite young,
(Men always do like him)

And the world goes on the same;
But whenever his name is mentioned
Some eye grows dim.

DO YOU KNOW HER?

DO you know her—the girl I mean?
She's pretty as pretty girls go.
A great chatterbox too,
And so aristocratic, you know.

She never knows anyone "Common,"
By the way an unusual fate,
Each friend and even acquaintance
Seems related to somebody great.

She's travelled around quite a little
Last season was down at the sea
There met so many "Nice people,"
Seemed so aristocratic to be.

Mr. Jones was very attentive
Son of Judge So and So there
And young Mr. Smith, second cousin
Of Sir Somebody Something, Somewhere.

'Tis true that her grandpapa Goodenough
Went around with a plumber's outfit
But then, *she's* so aristocratic
That doesn't matter a bit.

THE BABY'S NAME.

THEY christened the baby Margaret,
Such a grand old English name,
So replete with associations
Of old historic fame.

And then they called her "Tottie,"
Well—because she was so small,
And such a dainty little wilful
Bit of a human ball.

And one whom they call Pussy,
Will never get Winifrid
Save in her wedding notice
Or on her coffin lid.

Now why in the name of justice
And all that's common sense
Do you give your children names
That are only a vain pretense?

If you christen the baby Helen
Call her Helen, and not
Birdie, Petty, Pussy,
Dolly, Daisy, Dot.

SPRING.

'TIS Spring! and all the air
A dimmy dustiness holds
That tells of beating carpets,
Of the fire that smoulds
In back yards;
Where with lengthy poles
The hired man labors,
While the mistress scolds.
Sweet Spring!

Tell me ye winged winds
That round my pathway roar
Do ye not know some spot
Where mortals sweep no more?
Some lone and pleasant dell,
Some valley in the west,
Where free from toil and stain
The weary man may rest?
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low
And sighed for pity as it answered "No."

Tell me thou mighty deep,
 Whose billows round me play,
 Knowst thou some favored spot,
 Some island far away,
 Where weary man may find
 The house for which he sighs—
 Where stove pipe never lives
 And whitewash never flies?
 The loud waves rolling in perpetual flow
 Stopped for a while, and sighed to answer, "No."

And thou, oh cleanest moon,
 That with such lovely face
 Dost look upon the earth
 Asleep in night's embrace—
 Tell me, in all thy round
 Hast thou not seen some spot
 Where miserable man
 May live, and houseclean not?
 Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
 And a voice, sweet but sad, responded, "No."

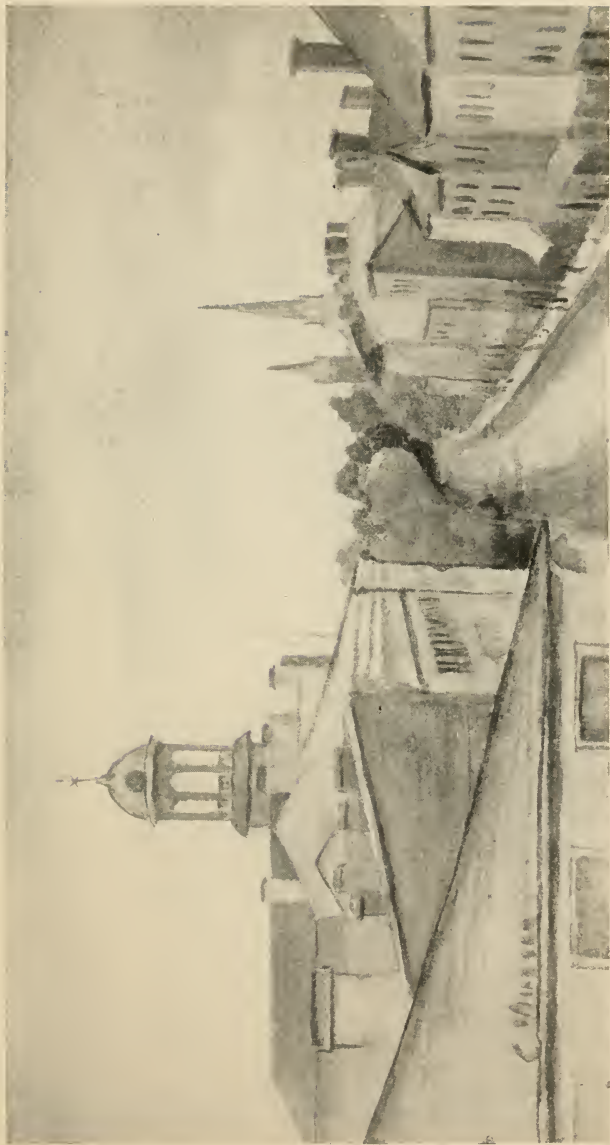
THE WEEDS OF COBOURG.

THE dusty burdock reigns supreme
In every path, and lane, and road,
While close beside with noisome mien
There grows that weed called "Toad."

And grasses rise not short nor few,
And other weeds their tribute pay,
So that a lady passing through
Can hardly pick her way.

Old Cobourg, once a cleanly town
Before the cow by-law
Is now a prey to thistle-down,
Such weeds we never saw!

And while we pass the Scot Act through,
About which all are talking,
Why can't we have a weed act too?
We need it for our walking.



OLD COBOURG

THE CANADIAN VOYAGEURS.

RIGHT gallantly went they,
 Five hundred strong,
 With jest and with laughter,
 With brave, manly song;
 Left father and mother,
 Left sweetheart and friend
 To succour a brave man
 Brave assistance to lend.
 Right gallantly sailed they
 O'er ocean's wild wave,
 But one of their number
 Found ocean his grave.
 Right gallantly rowed they
 'Tween Nile's sandy banks
 And in Nile's murky waters
 More joined the death ranks.
 Right gallantly went they
 How did they come back?
 With numbers diminished
 And death on their track.
 But with duty accomplished,
 And courage proved high;
 Having shown Mother England,
 For her they could die.

THE OLD KIRK.

(At Cobourg.)

BOARDED up its windows,
Taken off its tower,
Naught but graves around it—
Graves without a flower.

Silent are its preachers
Darkened are its aisles;
Gone to dust its elders
In lonely grass-grown files.

Moss-grown are the grave-stones
Choked with weeds each walk,
Broken are the railings—
Rusted key and lock.

Still, like a mother watching,
When is done her long day's work,
O'er her children's peaceful slumbers
Stands the grey and time-worn kirk.



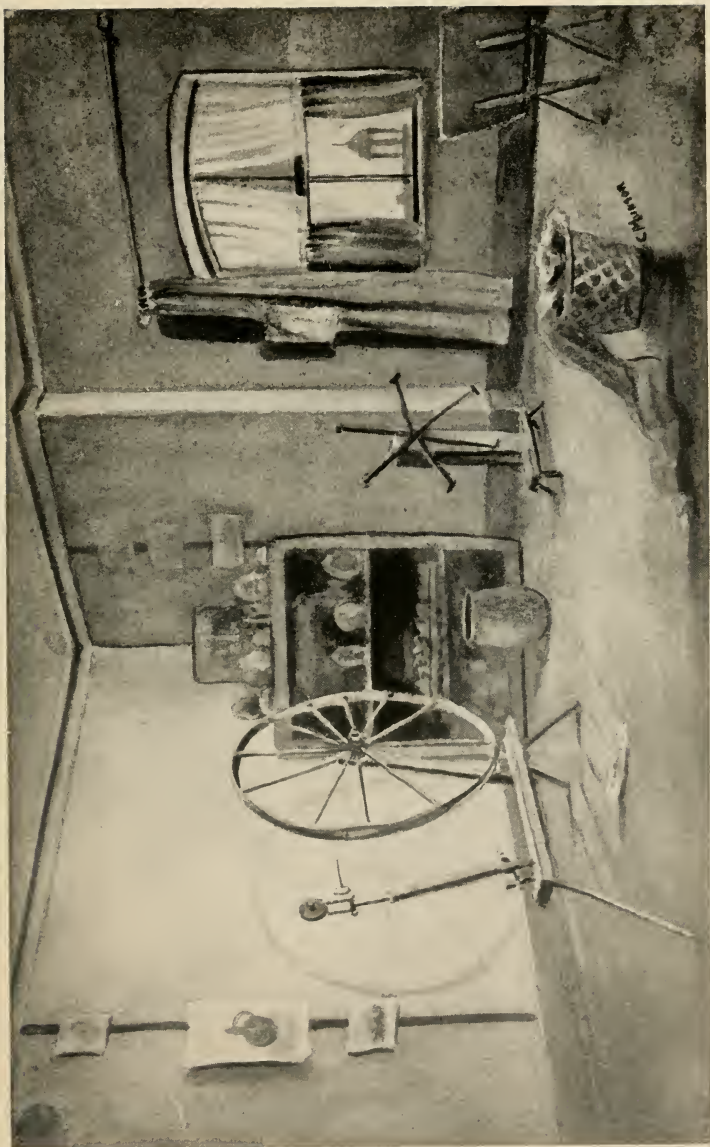
THE OLD KIRK, COBOURG

A PHOTOGRAPH.

A PICTURE of my little self,
 A tiny, chubby looking elf,
 With dimpled arms and face,
 Taken when just a few years old,
 An orange in one hand I hold
 With stolid baby grace.
 Taken when life was just the day
 On which I ope'd my eyes to play
 While strength would last.
 There was no future then to me,
 I never thought what was to be,
 I had not any past.
 Ah, little self who sittest there!
 Upon your face a solemn stare,
 Your slippered toes turned in.
 If wishing only could come true
 I'd wish that I again were you
 Just where life's paths begin.

THE OLD CORNER CUPBOARD.

A N old corner cupboard
Stands out in the shed.
Gone is its beauty,
Its glory has fled.
Old turpentine bottles
And much damaged delft,
Repose in disgrace
Side by side on the shelf.
But e'en as I pass
Doth a vision appear,
For now it is spring
And the house cleaning's here.
A little black paint
Into ebon wood grows,
Brass rod, silk curtains,
And nobody knows;
The old corner cupboard
Will end its career
In the studio corner
A swell chiffonier.
And when all my friends
Into ecstasies go,
I unblushingly say,
"Just the latest, you know."



ACROSS THE WAY.

SHE lived at number seventeen
 And he across the way.
 They used to play together
 Throughout the live-long day.

At early morn we'd hear him call
 "Come out, Babette, come out."
 And in a sweet high treble,
 "I'm coming, Jack," she'd shout.

He dressed in kilts and blouses then,
 She wore pinafores.
 Their hopes were centered on such things
 As tops and battledores.

But days go by, their ways diverge,
 No more at morn he calls.
 He has taken to wearing cricket belts,
 And she to parasols.

Gone are his kilts and sailor suits,
 All shaven off his curls.
 The head of an "Eleven"
 Would scorn to go with girls.

But time the changer of us all
Has oft a subtle plan
Of turning back to baby ways
The habits of a man.

Again across the way Jack goes
As in the days of yore.
The little beaux of five years old
Are wed at twenty-four.

Time moves along and once again
These two are separated.
He wears heavenly raiment now
And she to sorrow mated,

In widow's garb
Awaits the day
When once again she'll go to him
"Across the way."

MY WINDOW BOX.

I MADE it all myself you know
 Of odds and ends of wood,
 The hammer seemed erratic
 But I did the best I could.
 And if I could not hit the nail
 As should be, on the head
 I never failed to make a hit—
 I hit my nail instead.
 This all took place last summer
 But I never shall forget
 That little window garden
 With its fragrant mignonette.
 True, there was blue Lobelia
 And crimson, blushing Phlox,
 And dainty pink gypsophela
 All in that window box.
 And though it grew last summer
 In my mind 'tis blooming yet
 That little window garden
 With its fragrant mignonette.

AN ATTIC TREASURE.

'MID the treasures of an attic
Broken things and new
Things that once have had their day
And things that wouldn't do.

Here an army of half-worn boots
Saved up for the poor.
There a limp old darky doll
That someone loved, I'm sure.

Camping-out utensils
Put by until the spring.
Trunks with broken hinges
And many another thing

That the careful housewife treasures,
Thinking 'twere a sin
To throw away what some day
"Might just happen to come in."

Stands a small velocipede
As whole as when 'twas new,
Perfect is the saddle
And the wheels are sound and true.

But the children when they're playing
 Never take it from its place;
It is sacred to the memory
 Of a little missing face.

And the mother when she's searching
 Perchance for something near
Lest fall upon the senseless thing
 A mother's saddened tear.

THE POST BOX.

TIP, tap, there goes the lap,
Another letter, I'll just peep in.
I take, and I take, but I never give back,
Tick, tack, tickety, tack.
This from a lady, I know the style,
Dainty perfume and the daintiest paper
Would it be wrong the time to beguile?
"Thanks for the fan, just awfully sweet
I'll thank you better when next we meet,"
Tick, tack, tickety, tack.
I take, and I take, but I never give back.
This I see is another kind,
A wedding card in the latest fashion,
And right on top in their sombre dress
Two black-edged envelopes closely press.
And the baby card in its tiny case
Pushes its way to find a place,
Thus you see I'm a world in myself,
Joy and surprise, love and pleasure,
Grief and despair, and life and death,
All mixed up in common measure.
Tick, tack, tickety, tack,
I take, and I take, but I never give back.



MYSTERY.

I CAN see it once more, the old sun dial
Whitened and loosely set
Around whose base on a grassy slope
We children often met

To blow the puffs of the dandelions
To tell the time of day;
And never knew that the old sun dial
Could have shown us another way.

Until I heard some one grown up
To a childish question tell
That that quaint old wooden pillar
"Could tell the time quite well."

Then I looked at it and I watched it
Till my wonder grew to awe.
Till instead of that old sun dial
A mysterious thing I saw.

How could it, (a pillar of wood,
With never a hand to mark the hour
And never a key to wind it up)
Have such a wondrous power?

But now I, too, am quite grown up
The mystery's cleared away,
I see how it was the old sun dial
Could point out the time of day.

Yet life hath still its mysteries
That with wonder fill my heart;
But I hope to grow once more to an age
Where mystery hath no part.

A SHIP A SAILING.

(*Song*)

“ ‘I SAW a ship a sailing,
 A sailing on the sea;”
 How could I tell it was the ship
 That might come in for me?

“I saw a ship a sailing,
 A sailing on the sea;”
 How could I tell it was my ship,
 My golden Argosy.

“I saw a ship a sailing,
 A sailing on the sea;”
 How could I tell it was the ship
 That held my destiny?

I saw her pass the harbor
 And vanish from the land,
 And did not make a signal
 Nor even raise my hand.

I saw a ship a sailing,
 A sailing on the sea;
 How could I know it was the ship
 That might come in for me?

THE TIME TO HOLD YOUR TONGUE.

W H E N your friend relates a story
That he's told you o'er and o'er,
Turning first to coolly ask you
"If you've heard it e'er before."
Though your provocation's dreadful,
And you're bored almost to death
That's the time, oh, tired brother!
That's the time, to hold your breath.

When the girl you hate so dearly
Proudly tells you she's engaged
To the man you used to flirt with
And thinks that you're enraged.
Don't tell her that on one small "No"
You said, her fate has hung;
But remember, worthy sister
That's the time to hold your tongue.

In fact, on most occasions,
When you think you'd like to speak
It is sure to be much wiser
Not to even give a squeak.
For that bad "Unruly member"
Is very lightly hung.
And the wisest thing you ever did
Was that time you held your tongue.

OUR FELLOW MAN.

WHO is he, this mysterious person
 Before whose mandate all must bend?
 This omnipresent, calm, all-seeing judge of us,
 Now foe, now friend?

It isn't Smith, our next door neighbor,
 We would not give a rap for him,
 Nor his opinions on a subject,
 His principles are very dim.

It isn't Jones across the corner
 We care no more for him than Smith;
 But some way Smith and Jones together
 May constitute this potent myth.

Who holds a power more great than Juno,
 Whose sceptre rules o'er land and sea,
 And from whose judgment, cool, unerring,
 There's no reprieve for you nor me.

He goads the lagging steps of genius,
 He deals award of praise and blame,
 And for his crown of commendation,
 "The great, the fair, the good" all aim.

Who is he, this mysterious person?
 Who rules from Beersheba to Dan,
 Before whom all creation trembles
 This composite—Our Fellow Man.

A NAME.

FAR greater he who carves
Through poverty and toil himself a name
Than he, who swims between the sunny banks of ease,
Unto the golden shores of fame.

OLD SONGS.

I CANNOT sing the old songs now
I sang long years ago.
For some are lost, and some are gone
And some I do not know.

IN TEN MINUTES.

YOU ask me to write
In not ten minutes quite
A perfect piece of rhyme, Sir,
And if I do, no thanks to you
And no thanks to time, Sir.
If mine's the worst
With my emotions I'll burst
Before I'll be seen to cry, Sir,
But if mine's the best
Why, then let it rest
'Twon't be that I'm any the wiser.

AT CAMP.

ANOTHER year and here again
We idle as we did of yore,
We turn the night to day and then
Late on into the morning snore.
No thought have we of care or pain,
Too lazy e'en to make a fuss
When all the cold, relentless rain
Comes through the hut and dampens us.

THE CORDUROY ROAD.

HALF a log, half a log
Half a log onward
Shaken and out of breath,
Rode we and wondered.
Ours not to reason why,
Ours but to clutch and cry
While onward we thundered.

A BEQUEST.

ONLY a shrunken sunflower
 Withered and lean and tall;
But ah, the tender memories
 To me, those blooms recall!

I watch him woo a maiden,
 I see him raise his hand
To pluck those golden blossoms
 That now all withered stand.

He never plucked the flowers
 His words were all in vain,
He left that maiden's presence
 Stung by a cruel pain.

Though he was a proud young lover
 And I but a humble bee;
But what was sweet for lovers
 Wasn't honey for me.

BELATED.

U P the road and over the hill!
Trot along quickly Jerry,
There's much of the road before us still
And the friends that await us are merry.

Up the road and over the hill!
The moments drag slowly and tardy,
Though Jerry is patient and jogs with a will
And strong are his muscles and hardy.

Now we have reached it, over we go
Ho, for the friends that await us!
Drat on the pitch holes that make us go slow,
And drat on the roads that belate us!

THE CAPTAIN.

(Song)

THERE are heroes too, who ne'er go forth to fight
Never kill their fellow man as heroes do,
But the honour is to him, whether it be wrong or right,
To the man who at the helm commands the crew.

And if things go wrong, it is he who takes the blame
Not the man who's down below or at the gun
For the obloquy's to him, the disgrace and the shame
To the man who has command of everyone.

Then if things go right it is he should have the fame,
The honour, and the praise and fair renown,
For the credit is to him, the reward and the name
To the man who is the *head* for everyone.

LITTLE SHIPS.

(Song)

L I T T L E ships that run to port
When the weather's stormy,
Find their calm in mother's arms
Harbor safe and balmy.

Little ships must drift away
Out upon life's ocean,
Fain they'd sail another day
To that calm devotion.

Little boats must struggle on
Battered, bruised, and broken,
Till they anchor far away
In that port unspoken.

There the Harbor Master waits
And the lights are steady,
While the waters smooth and calm
Give them welcome ready.



C. Munson

THE MANITOBA FARMER.

WHERE wide and boundless prairies roll
He turns the soil, as black as coal
Six feet beneath him, mile on mile,
Those uncut diamonds glowing smile.
The earth below no longer sleeps,
It feels the touch, and stirs, and leaps,
Awakening from its centuries' rest
Like some strong infant, glad, refreshed;
And breaking into gleeful smile
It heaps its treasures pile on pile
Of yellow wealth, a golden store,
That only grows from taking more.
No landlord's foot upon his neck
His new born manhood's ardours check.
No old world phantasy of caste
Shall hold him now from out the past.
New spirit, courage, and new soil
Make him a king, the king of toil.

A T D A N V I L L E .

THE hills lift up their gentian heads
Where mellow 'neath the skies
The fields are ripening for the scythe,
Where this breezy village lies.

And on the crest of a nearby hill
The village fathers sleep
Among the fields they loved so well
"Their silent watch they keep."

No fret nor toil can reach them now,
Nor tumult of the mart,
Quiet each hand and calm each brow,
And still each honest heart.

Not for the sound of a name they strove
Nor shout of the world's applause;
But patiently turned their thoughts to the soil,
And their minds to nature's laws.

Some went afar in search of fame,
Of honour, wealth, or power;
But this sweet spot of their childhood's days
Has welcomed them home once more.

WINGS.

WITH the speed we used to make those days
 The Railway wasn't in it.
 The Automobile and Aeroplane
 Couldn't begin to spin it.

We fled in a trice to India
 And lived in a region tropic.
 Or transplanted ourselves to Rotten Row
 In a period microscopic.

We aired our silks of the latest style
 With other dames of fashion,
 And only came to ourselves again
 When the rocking chair took to crashing.

Into the furniture right behind,
 When we became too rocky
 (Of course our horses were spirited
 And sometimes would grow balky).

And then when we grew tired of the "Row"
 We vanished off to France,
 And drove in Paris and other towns
 With considerable elegance.

We entered the drawing rooms of the great
With manners chic and easy,
And lolled in our chariot through the Bois
Or down the Champs Elysee.

I was just enough older than she
To win her admiration,
And she took her cue as quick as a flash
In every situation.

She was a willing little slave
To all my errant fancies,
And lent herself with an air of grace
To our wonderful elegancies.

Now the little sister has travelled far
In a chariot swifter still,
And I am left to reach vain hands
O'er that space we cannot fill.

For I, alas, am sorry to say,
Am neither here nor there!
And I wish I had wings as I had those days
In that dear old rocking chair.

THE DESERTED FARM.

QUIET now the portal where once the children played,
Hushed the merry prattle at the door,
Smokeless the old chimney where erst the fire was laid
Silent now the footsteps on the floor.
But the house is haunted
With joys that now are past
Hospitality I never shall forget
Memories of kindness that, aye, for time must last,
And their sweetness surely lingers yet.



NAPOLEON.

U P through the ranks of men he sprung
Meteor-like, alone.
On his bold will the whole world hung
While well he filled a throne.

He named his family kings and queens,
His hand was on the helm.
He did not know what justice means,
His game was making realm.

To peaks unscaled before by man
He climbed, and shone, and strayed,
But having no strong grasp on God
He wavered, flickered, swayed—

Then, like a rocket, black and spent
He dropped from out the height,
Plumbed the dark depths of discontent
And sputtered out of sight.



A PORTRAIT.

SHE sat for us to paint her so
 A member of the class,
 With her beautiful auburn hair aglow
 A lithe and graceful lass.

We said we'd make a "scheme" of her,
 With her glorious hair so Titian,
 That would make an artist dream of her
 And that manner so patrician.

We said we'd like to have on her
 With that wonderful hair aglow
 Her soft kimona, lavender
 On her sloping shoulders so.

The soft, cool tone of that pale green light,
 Was the sheen of the woodbine there,
 That rustled without in the summer night
 A background for her hair.

The red of her hair, and the green of the leaves,
 And that old, silk, mauve, Kimona,
 Together a picture so queenly weaves
 That we gave her the name Corona.

CANTERBURY.

THIS cathedral, old and hoary,
Was the nurse of England's faith.
Foster-mother of her glory,
Reared the infant from its birth.

On this lap, so broad, capacious
Lay the baby safe, and warm,
With her arms so strong and gracious
Held the suckling safe from harm.

Cradled it, and soothed and scolded;
Watched its tottering baby feet,
With her mother love enfolded
Till it ventured out complete.

Through these arches, once so stately,
Many a history maker trod,
Men who served their nation greatly,
Served their sovereign and their God.

Great Augustine, godly, wary,
Paced this spot so hallowed now,
Taught sweet Bertha, missionary,
How to make her husband bow



To the One God, and to love him,
 Baptized him in Christian rite,
Turned his thoughts to things above him,
 From the darkness to the light.

Chaucer, Odo, Anselm, Becket,
 Wandered here so long ago,
And their memories bedeck it
 With a never fading glow.

THE MILL.

FROM every corner of the earth
Our people are,
From distant lands that gave them birth
From near and far.

Slav, Prussian, Hindu, border thief
Come crowding in,
With Mohawk and Comanche chief
And such like kin.

Old Sam proceeds to grind them fine
With every man,
Each one drops in and falls in line
American.

The native from far Afric's sward
Begins to fade;
He's part of us now fast and hard,
Our brother made.

And from that sweet and verdant spot
Old Erin's Isle,
The mill wheel almost grows too hot
And clogs awhile.

But who when he is minced the same
 With every man,
Will fonder be of that proud name?
 American.

I'd like to know what we'll turn out,
 'Twixt you and me,
When Sam's been at it just about
 Another century.

OLDE PLYMOUTH TOWNE.

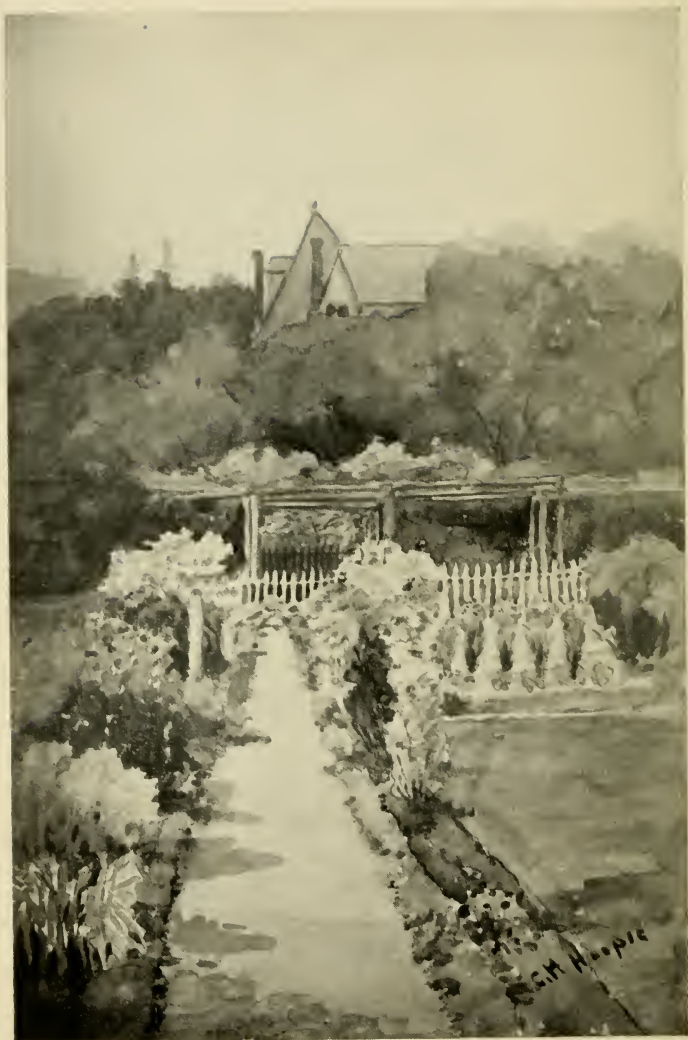
WEARY and tired they put me down,
A Pilgrim in Olde Plymouth Towne
The spot I was to see at last
Rich with the relics of the past.
I'd dreamed of it for many a year—
That hallowed place by all held dear,
How leaning 'gainst that sacred rock
I'd hear the diapason shock
Of waves, break on that rugged shore,
Taking me back two hundred years and more.
(Just here I'll say I found the rock,
And incidentally the shock)
It lay up on a dusty street
Surrounded by a paling neat,
They looked at night for fear of thieves
(A husky one, that weight, who heaves!)
But then the shore, that rugged coast
Of prose and poetry the boast!
I found it, too, where sluggish waves
Acted for old tin cans as graves,
Refuse from names of ancient worth,
Aldens and Brewsters, and so forth.
They still remain to catch the eye
On sign and placard raised on high,



OLD PLYMOUTH TOWNE

And my sweet hostess, hospitable, gay,
Carried the name of Hathaway.
Of course I realized that time
Had altered things since that old rhyme.
The poet's eye had pierced the past
And that grand picture, which must last,
Was true, for where the town,
Dips now, so sudden down
To that wide, stretching beach,
In that far day, the waves did reach:
And then a virgin forest stood
Where now is house, and street and road.
In this old lane I pictured there,
Still can I see Priscilla fair.
Tripping along, but not alone,
For near that quaint old wall of stone
John Alden comes to keep the tryst
From other lanes that curve and twist.
A man as trusted in his word
As he was doughty with his sword.
'Tis true this lane was surely trod
By just those two, but every rod
Was covered then by those great trees
Whose "giant branches" stirred the breeze
(Or words something like that,
I haven't got it very pat)
The same old spring still runs as clear,
As it did in that fateful year,
"God's Acre," now so restful and so still,

Once echoed war whoops wild and shrill
Where the sturdy little stockade stood
Sheltering the dear ones from that brood
Of stealthy red men, pouncing down
To curdle the blood of Plymouth Towne,
Ah, it was full of valient men!
(But I'm glad I saw it now, not then.)



FLATBUSH GARDENS.

HIDDEN away, like the petals
That cling to the heart of a rose,
These dear old Flatbush gardens
In the midst of the city repose.

Its hurrying tumult crowds them,
And soon the thirst for gold
Will lick them up as the Simoon
Licks up the streamlet cold.

But now their paths are fragrant
With garden flowers aglow—
Old fashioned blooms of the country
In sweet profusion blow.

And when I hear my hostess
Announcing in accents clear
She "Must go to Brooklyn to market"
I exclaim "Why, Brooklyn is here."

Stealthy, solid, and busy,
It has crept up to her door,
But so strong is the force of habit
That she goes "To town" as of yore.



FORT MARION GATE.

NO Spanish sentry paces now,
No guard is at the gate,
Where those ruined entrance pillars
Stand grim and desolate.

The strong porticullis, broken,
Now keeps no foe at bay
Where old Fort Marion's rampart
Stands staunch, and dark, and gray.

The dungeons long have loosed their bars
And hold no stricken wretch,
No forms within those sodden cells
In dread and anguish stretch.

But my mind as swift as the sea-gull
Sweeps back to that long ago,
And pictures of that other day
Kaleidoscopic show.

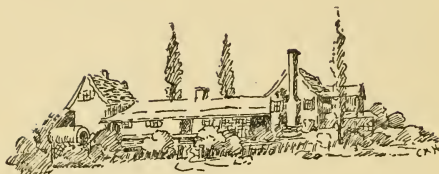
What gay Hidalgos enter
From their galleys off the sea!
What dark browed priests are gathered
In this little colony!



FORT MARION GATE

Did they come to preach the gospel
To the errant redman's soul?
Or was it lust for booty
Chose this garden for their goal?

They builded well and surely,
On this spot beside the sea,
And their mission bells are calling
Through four centuries to me.



ROBERT L. STEVENSON AT BAKER COTTAGE

THE same old lilac guards the gate
Where once his footsteps strayed;
The same old chimney stands today
Where those sweet tales were laid.

The kind old couple linger yet,
Who catered to his wants;
And with reverence they handle
The relics of his haunts.

But he has wandered far afield,
Where wider vistas lure,
And richer gems of thought he strings
On golden chains more pure.

The river glides below the same—
The lazy Saranac.
Reflecting gorgeous maples
And the fragrant tamarack.



THE ROOFS OF SARANAC

But he will watch its banks no more,
 Unless from higher plane,
 Nor weave his fancies on its edge
 With the shuttle of his brain.

The beauteous mountains beckoned him
 To higher range of thought,
 Their mystery and color
 His glowing visions brought.

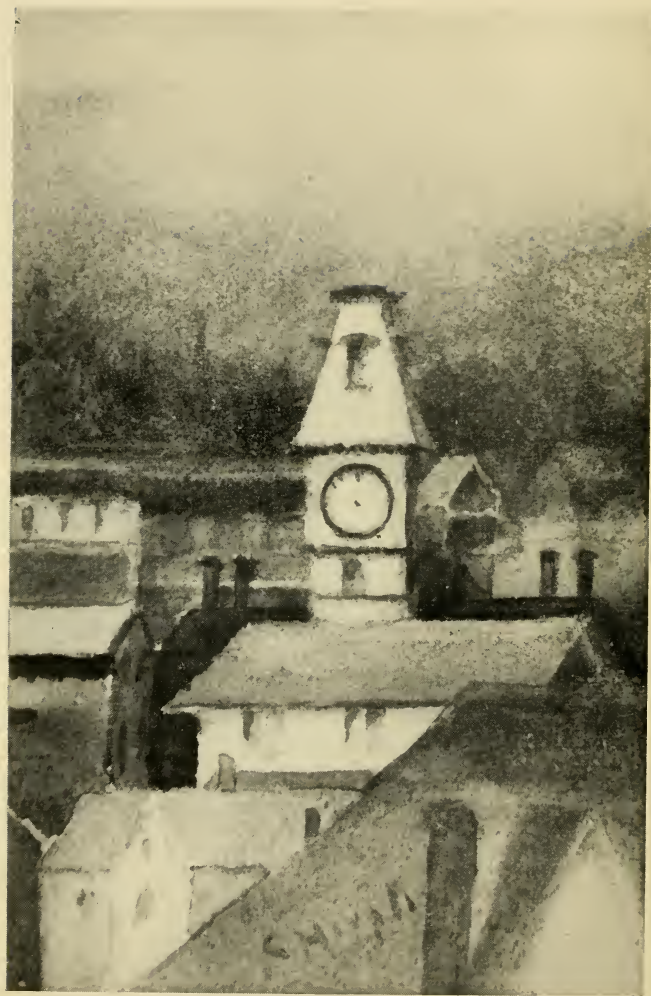
And mind the lord of matter
 Laid the phantom for a time
 As he spun his woof of fiction
 And wove his web of rhyme.



THE LIGHTS OF SARANAC.

THEY sparkle in the village,
They twinkle on the hill,
They dance upon the water
In the night air, soft and still,
They light the river pathway
A string of shining gems,
And Lake Flower's skirts embroider
Where the town her border hems.
They swing a dancing circlet
Around Mt. Pisgah's neck
And up and down, and round about,
The whole long town bedeck.
They hang like fairy garlands
Through pine and tamarack
They flash like glowing fireflies
The Lights of Saranac.





ROOFS OF SARANAC

THE ROOFS OF SARANAC.

SNUGGLED in the village,
Sheltered 'neath the hill,
Toppling on the river
Go where'ere I will.
Spire, and tower, and turret,
Picturesque and fair,
Posing to be painted
Await me everywhere.
Clustered in the valley,
Alone upon the height,
Glimpses down an alley
That fill me with delight.
Like some old foreign city,
Perched among the hills,
What beauty here to study
Its every roadway fills,
Ahead, behind, and everywhere,
Way off, and near, and back,
Compose for me unconsciously
The roofs of Saranac.



BEYOND.

I HAVE a longing now and then
A queer unsanctioned thought,
That I might wander back again
Down centuries that are not.
That I might thread, in flesh and mind,
The paths of other days,
And leave this era's dust behind
From my adventuring ways.
Not that I hold my own time least,
"The heir of all the ages"
But that I long like some chained beast
For freedom, bold, courageous.
To stroll where'er I would through time,
To dally here or yonder,
To rest in some fame scented clime
Or through some epoch wander,
Where joust and tournament took place
And ladies fair awaited
With gracious mien and beaming face
To crown their lords elated.
I'd like to press the hands of those
I've loved in song and story,
I'd like to watch the armies close
In battle fierce and gory.

As, when on some fair English field
The early Henrys wrested
In Norman hauberk, bow and shield
With Saxon knights all crested.
And then to take a peep at France,—
In all her pomp and splendor,
Before the wild beast, passion, chance,
Of revolution rent her.
And even then, though slow my way,
And loath to mix with madness,
I'd like some pitying word to say
To her, the queen of sadness,
Who bore with dignity and grace
Her cruel humiliations.
Bereft of all, her throne, her place,
Deserted by the nations.
And when I thought I'd had enough
Of other men and ways
Come tramping up the time worn steps
That lead to our own days.
But here I am like some chained beast
Tied to a peg of time,
Condemned to dance until released
My little runic rhyme,
Around and round the same old peg
The groove may deeper grow;
But no far reaching circles spread
That I may know.

Allowed to wear the groove so deep
 Around and round, and round,
Or straining at my rope to creep
 An inch on further ground.
Some, who content to gambol loose
 With lax untensioned string,
Will never feel the galling noose
 That checks those wandering.
For some will stretch their rope too much
 And strain toward the vast
Out-lying worlds, whose borders touch
 Ahead, or from the past.
Now I must neither chafe nor fret
 The good Lord tied me here.
His meaning is not shown as yet,
 It has not been made clear.
Each link connects with other link
 To make the chain complete
And I must be content to think
 My little circle meet.

PRE EXISTENCE.

I KNOW I am, and feel I am to be
For evermore, and think it strange
There could have been a time
Without a me.
What does forever more mean?
If not always?
And always means not just from now,
Until the then of future days.
Infinite, but from now till then,
And back, so it doth seem to me,
E'en unto now again.
And I do feel that I have been before
And in some other form perchance
Did other spheres explore.
Who'll tell me whence my soul did spring?
Or who can tell what sponsors stood
At my soul's christening?

PERFECTION.

THERE is a point this side perfection
Where genius halts,
And carefully steps aside,
For fear from one false move,
One over touch, she ruin all
That's gone before.
Success more often crowneth him
Who wisely leaves a part undone,
Than him who busily
Does all too well.

THE HALF WAY HOUSE.

“**A** LITTLE while we live,”
We mortals say
As though our living were a thing
Of just today.
As though the future wide and vast
Had nought of life
Nor yet the past.
Forgetting this world's
But a travellers' inn along the way,
A stopping place, a half way house
Where we may stay
Until the plans unfold.
Just holding back
Until our guide
Disclose the track.

A JOURNEY.

WE travel by the land
And we travel by the sea
But there is still a journey
That is left for you and me.
Out of the gates of custom,
Beyond the walls of clay,
Past the hedges of environment
We all must take our way.
On through the mind's fair regions
Until we reach the goal,
The wide and glorious country
Heaven-bounded, of the soul.
Then pushing on within it,
On beyond the mind,
We smile at times to see how far
We leave ourselves behind.
Old habits lose their ancient power
Old hate is turned to love,
The world lies all beneath us
And only God above.
Till pushing on still further
We almost think we see
Beyond the merely visible
Into eternity.

A BUNCH OF FLOWERS.

LIFE threw me a bunch of flowers one day,
 A bunch of lilies rich and rare;
 But it was not lilies I wanted then
 And so I left them lying there.

Again Life threw me from out her store,
 For she hath many both rich and sweet,
 But I sighed for only "The Rose, The Rose"
 And left them lying at my feet.

At last to my joy Life threw it down
 And oh! to my sight it looked so fair!
 But e'en as I stooped at my eager grasp
 The petals falling lay scattered there.

Then turning back I sought again
 The flowers I had carelessly thrust aside;
 But not a bloom did I ever find,
 For all neglected they'd withered and died.

THIS WORLD AND THAT.

THERE is no "This" world and no "That"
We know that both are one,
And our heaven, if we will it
Here on earth may be begun.

God works not as we do,
And sees not in our way,
He can weave into His heaven
Our common every day.

With its troubles and temptations
That worry us and vex.
Its sordid cares of living
That do so sore perplex.

Its routines and common places,
Each petty mean detail,
The things that we succeed in,
And the things in which we fail.

He can use them if we let Him
In His own wondrous way
So as to make of heaven
Our common every day.

WHY.

WHY do we strive so hard to hold
 The New, we prize today so much?
 When it tomorrow as the Old
 May better prove as such.

Why do we so regret the youth
 We think we've left so far behind,
 When age is but the door, forsooth
 Through which eternal youth we find?

RICHES.

I SAW a man grown aged with care
In counting o'er his treasured gold,
Each stock, and bond, and railway share
Had only helped to make him old.
And as he reckoned up his wealth,
Countless it seemed so great a store,
I saw that it with subtle stealth
Had made him sad and left him poor.
Then I saw a little boy
Run out into the wayside sand,
And with a shout of happy joy
He strained it shimmering through his hand,
And gloated over it anew
As though he'd found a gift untold.
Which was the treasure of the two?
The wayside dirt, or miser's gold?

SOME NEW THING.

COME poet now, and book me
Some new thing."

Thus to the poet
Spoke the unhappy king.

From our first baby days

When nothing pleases like a shining shoe,
Through all life's older, varied ways

The mind delights in something new.
That which we have always doth tire,

As words repeated oft their meaning lose,
To what we have not do we all aspire

So from the beaten tracks we turn to choose
The fresher good, that beckons from afar;

But often when we hold it near
We find it like some bright star

That's fallen, all dull appear.
No longer shining as we thought,

As we approached its brilliancy withdrew.
But lo! a marvel has been wrought!

That which was old is once again the new.
So when this world grows stale and old,
And nought seems fresh to me and you,

We do but leave it and behold !

Another world all bright and new.

Though I do think the next may be,

But after all this same old life,

Made fresh and bright eternally,

Without the pain, without the strife.

MUSIC.

O UR life is like a harp
Which we may tune, for well, or ill,
But on which God will play
And make the music of our days
In His own way.

He will not always strike the notes of gladness
Each joyous chord of life
Is close beside some minor key,
Which must be sometimes struck
To swell the tune to perfect melody.

YOU AND DEATH.

DID you ever brush 'gainst death?
 Feel the breath
Of the monster on your face?
 Then some grace
Interposed, he withdrew;
 But for you
Ever after life was changed,
 Rearranged.
Side by side with your joys—
 Earthly toys,
Phantom-like and grim
 Knowing him
Still he stalks. You forget?
 Never yet.
Though at times dimly shown,
 Never thrown.
Turn and speak and maybe
 He will answer, ask him why
You must die.
 Turn and wrestle with him now,
Never bow,
 Till he whisper mid the strife—
I am Life!

NOT WHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD.

THE bird had its place to nest,
The flower its spot to bloom,
But in all this God created earth
His Son could find no room.

The little child that slept,
Was lulled on its mother's breast,
But the child of the Lord who had given all
Could find no place to rest.

Human He was, though God,
Tired by His human care,
But so homeless on this cold earth of ours
As to envy the beast his lair

Heir though He was to a crown,—
Son of the Lord and King,
There was no beggar in all the land
So poor in each earthly thing.

Who was to blame, the Jew?
Who was to blame, the Greek?
Ye who reject him now reply,
And ye who refuse him speak.

MY FRIEND.

To M. H.

I LIKE her not so much for what she is,
As what she means to be.
For like an open manuscript
Her spirit is to me.

Not by cold words,
The awkward chain of speech,
But by the joining hands of thought
Each answers unto each.

And we hold converse sweetest often
When our tongues are still.
No distance can divide us!
No space we cannot fill!

She has her faults, I know them
She also knoweth mine.
But e'en our very failings,
Our spirits do entwine.

No aspersions, nor calumny,
Could have effect on me.
Because, you see, I love her
For what she means to be.

A HEAVENLY TOUCH.

WAS it a dream, or was it a fancy?
 Was it some errant thing round in the night?
 That breathed on my soul with a soft necromancy
 And filled all my heart with a subtle delight?

It wasn't a dream, nor it wasn't a vision,
 That faded and left me at breaking of day,
 And I'm sure as I slept that something Elysian
 Had brushed 'gainst my soul as it sped on its way.

I can't say how far my spirit had travelled
 To meet and commune with that heavenly guest,
 But I know in the morning I wakened and marvelled
 To feel, that my care burdened soul was at rest.

THE WIRELESS WORD.

A CROSS my soul on vibrant string
The message of his love is set,
The soul attuned that found me here
Across the abyss can reach me yet.

Wireless and soundless, true and straight,
As falcon's wing that cleaves the air,
The message from the other side
Vibrates, and keeps me from despair.

With such a mind he could not die,
The flesh but loosed him, set him free,
And I who follow far behind
Can feel him turn and beckon me.

There is so much we do not know,
That little else it matters not—
Why we should live, why we should die,
Or why we should have been begot.

But this is all I feel I know
Somewhere, somehow, he waits for me.
Meanwhile the messages he sends
Find me across that soundless sea.

THE WORLD IS SMALL.

‘“THE world is small.” Our neighbor flees
 To hide in parts unknown,
 But when we take a trip that year
 His face next door is shown.

“The world is small.” We travel far
 To leave our pain behind,
 But when we get there, cheek by jowl
 The same old pain we find.

And worlds are small, and when we flee
 And leave this world behind,
 My other someone says to me
 The same old world we'll find.

So what's the use of rushing off
 These fields so green to see
 When the dear, old, arid wastes I know
 Are good enough for me.

A S O N G O F N O W .

ARE there no songs worth singing
Save those that have been sung?
Are there no tunes worth ringing
But the tunes already rung?

We sigh for the days that are vanished
And dream of days to be.
But is all beauty banished
From the present for you and me?

No, the days that are should be better
Than the days that were by far
No thought of the past should fetter
Our joy in the days that are.

For the past has shut forever
Its adamantine door
And it may be that never
Shall we traverse the days before.

So I'll sing my song of the present
I'll sing my song of now,
For there is much that is pleasant
In the days that are, I trow.

WAVES.

I STOOD by the shore of the lake
 And watched the waves at my feet
 Come up to rise and break,
 Go back with a sure retreat.

Some rose with a mightier force,
 Broke in a grander crest,
 Left for a while in their course
 A mark higher up than the rest.

But just as surely went back
 Into the infinite deep,
 Their foam submerged in the track
 Of the incoming waves in their sweep.

Some that were weak and small
 Went back with the undertow,
 Scarce making a song at all,
 Just a soft murmur and low.

Which lingers long in the heart
 With a cadence far more sweet,
 Than the noisier, brilliant part
 Of some of the waves at my feet.

And I liken the waves of the lake
Unto the lives of men
On the shores of time that break
And then go back again.

Back to the boundless sea,
The ocean from which they sprang,
Where, methinks, with a fuller melody
Shall the rest of their song be sung.



TO AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY.

COLD tenement of clay,
 From which the soul is fled,
 Why lingerest yet among us
 Though numbered with the dead?

What mockery of nature,
 What mystic art of man,
 Has kept thy poor form shapely
 While countless ages ran?

If thy shrunk eyes could open,
 With power thy voice could swell,
 What marvels of antiquity
 Thy parchment tongue could tell.

While we who gaze upon thee
 With consciousness of power,
 Would shrink before thy knowledge
 Thy wisdom's mighty dower.

And how wouldst thou regard us,
 With wonder in thine eyes,
 For wonders which we call our own,
 Discoveries which we prize?

Or wouldst thou smile upon us
With pity in thy face
To think that we may never know
The science of thy race?

And as mid night for ages
Thy shapen form did lie
So it may now mid sunshine
As ages more go by.

While he who brought thee hence,
From far and ancient lands,
“Dust unto Dust” hath since returned
With meekly folded hands.

Still this thy lesson teach,
With this our minds imbue
That what to us seems latest found
From age has been made new.

POOR JONES.

‘‘POOR Jones is dead!’’
 The words go out from mouth to mouth,
 ’Tis all that is or can be said,
 Just those two words in many tones—
 ‘‘Poor Jones!’’ ‘‘Poor Jones!’’

Perhaps a word or two,—
 ’Tis always thus when that is old
 Which yesterday did seem so new,
 Will mingle now, of what he owns,
 Or did, alas! Poor Jones!

Why do we call him poor?
 Who dreamed at night of phantom griefs,
 And wakened but to trials more sure,
 Who looked on death as some sweet, dim,
 And restful touch, awaiting him.

It is our little earthly way,
 We mean it well for lack of else;
 And we repeat (’tis hard to look beyond the clay)
 Just those two words in many tones
 ‘‘Poor Jones!’’ ‘‘Poor Jones!’’

THE WINDOW OF SELF.

I LOOKED out at life one day,
Out of the window of self,
And all the world looked hard and gray—
Hard with the hardness from gold that starts,
And gray with the grayness of lonely hearts.
I looked out at life one day,
Out of the window of self
And all the world looked bright and gay—
Gay with the gayness of happy hearts.
And bright with the brightness
That love imparts.
So do we look each day,
Out of the window of self,
Judging life by our own alway
Whether our hearts
Be happy or sad,
So will the world
Seem goodly or bad,
Thought I to myself one day.

THE KEY.

I HELD a treasure in my heart,
But, when I wished it to impart
Its riches unto me,

I found, alas, I had no key.
Then happiness was mine.

And for awhile I basked in strong sunshine.
Ah, now! I thought! I tuned my lyre, I sang,

But through it all a dullness rang,
Then I despaired and I forgot.

Till all at once, unasked, unsought,
My treasure emptied at my feet,

In accents pure, and strong, and sweet,
At last, at last, I'd found the key!

When Sorrow laid her hand on me.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

SHE stayed when all the congregation went.
When down the lengthy aisles
In long decorous files
The people gently trod.
While from the organ loft,
The music sweet, and soft,
Breathed of a forgiving God.
I did not know her sin,
Nor if, when she were all confessed,
The priest with absolution blessed,
Or painful penance dealt.
I only know while in her eyes
Like some poor hare's before it dies
Her agony was spent.
She stayed, when all the congregation went.

ADRIFT.

I AM adrift upon a wide, wide sea.
The pitiless sun beats down on me
By day, and when there comes the night
I see no guiding harbor light.
My anchor gone, my rudder lost
I'm pitched and driven, tempest-tossed,
I hear the distant, grinding boom
Of waves that break in that dark gloom
On dangerous cliff, and treacherous beach
That I am heading fast to reach,
And yet through all that black despair
I feel my Harbor Master's there.

T I M E E V E N S A L L .

THOUSANDS of years ago—

When Moses over Egypt reigned,
Almost a king, the records show,
And Pharoh's daughter scarce obtained
More faithful love—

One day upon a temple stair
As Moses sought the door above,
A fleeing sailor met him there,
Anguished his face and wild his eye;

“Oh save me prince by thy great power.
Oh save me prince!” but vain the cry

No might had prince nor king that hour.
The raging people seized their prey
And trampled him beneath their feet
Until a shapeless mass he lay,

His fate considered meet.
“What was his sin?” Ye ask with bated breath.

It was that then and long years after that,
He merited such awful death,

Who killed a sacred cat.
Now ton loads of this one time god,

(Oh, how our gods do fall!)
Are sold for fertilizing sod,

Time evens all.

EGYPT.

OH, Egypt! I could weep for thee,
 Is there no hand to stay thy desecration?
 Cradle once for all the world,
 Now foot ball for each nation
 That needs a plaything.
 Shall it be that Cleopatra's bones
 Be hacked about a "Penny Show"?
 Her needle crumble
 In a western snow?
 The very gods stooped down
 To make thee great.
 And must I see thee now
 So desolate?
 I'd rather dream of thee
 In all thy proud entirety
 Than see thee scattered
 Piece meal round
 Thy relics cumbering
 Barbarous ground.

TRANSLATION OF THE LORELEI

Heinrich Heine.

I WONDER why such great sadness
Disturbs me, as I tell
Of this old tale of madness,
(Like a tolling funeral knell.)

The air is cool and darkling
And rapidly flows the Rhine,
Where the mountain peaks are sparkling
In the evening sunshine.

The beautiful maiden queen
Upon that throne so fair
With wonderful gems is seen,
As she combs her golden hair.

She combs it with comb of gold,
And singeth gleefully
With a sweetness that can't be told
An enchanting melody.

The sailor in little boats
Is seized with a wild desire.
He sees not the cliff as he floats,
His gaze on that glittering spire.

I believe the waves will devour,
In the end, both sailor and boat;
If he cannot resist the power
Of the Lorelei, afloat.

HER DAILY BREAD.

SHE works all day for her daily bread,
Aye, and most of the night.
And the pittance she earns as her reward
Isn't worth the candle light.

Some must struggle, and strive, and pinch,
They dare not wait nor stop,
On one side starvation and death,
On the other the grim sweat shop.

And what is her life when its all been told,
But the grind of a great sweat shop,
Where she earns her pittance as long as she can,
Then must falter, and faint, and drop.

NATURE NOTES

ALONE.

ALONE, to be alone,
When leaves are blown
In rustling droves athwart the way,
And grasses bend their heads to say
Some leafy gossip of the wind.
Some whispered secret of their kind.
Alone? When chipmunks scold,
And in their loneliness made bold
Throw villanelles into my face,
With gay, full-throated, saucy grace.
Alone? When stooping down to nature's shell
I catch the far reverberate swell
Of nature's mysteries out thrown.
If this be loneliness, how sweet to be alone!



THE REALIST.

HE stoops to paint the lines
Beside the vein that marks a blade of grass—
And misses all the pageants of the sky that pass

The shifting of the shadows on the hill,
The dancing of the light upon the rill

He cannot paint. He sees alone
By some small pool, a tiny stone
Which he would make so real
That, being boys, we fain would steal.

He cannot reach the setting
Of the sun behind the pines.
Some shrivelled twig, torn by the winds,
That hangs in limpness from a bough
Will strain his every effort now
Until he will produce again
A thing of deadness of more pain
Than was the first to look upon.
Meanwhile another sunset's gone.

He tears up green things by the roots
To see how they may grow.
Is only true what we may know?
And what we touch alone the real?
Are not the hidden things we feel
Much more reality
Than those we see?

For things that show, to him who looks
Are but the title words of books.

MY WINDOW PANE.

A PICTURE lies before me
Pure are its tints and clear,
Surely the touch of a master
Has lately lingered here.

Bits of frozen meadows
Glint 'neath a frozen moon,
And glimpses of stilly brooklets
That melt not 'neath the noon.

Against a sky all sparkling
As if with diamonds set
Pine-like trees lift up their heads
In sombre silhouette.

Flowers in starry bas-relief
Intaglios of gold
Like fabled, fairy dancing grounds
My dazzled vision hold.

Was it the North Wind's spirit
That homesick passing by
Wrought with his chilly fingers
These beauties for mine eye?

Methinks he brought on his palette,
From regions of endless snow,
Sketches of his native land
A land we do not know.

And I feel I have taken a journey
Through parts man hath never seen.
But alas! Is it only fancy,
And the North Wind's mystic sheen?

ENGLISH VIOLETS.

DEAR little English violets
How sweet and shy you are!
Hidden away in your green leaves
Yet I find you out from afar.

You, you purple beauty,
Decked out like a royal queen,
And you, you little girl fairy
All in white with a tucker of green

Breathe you never so softly
You cannot hide from me.
I will track you by your sweetness
Though never a flower I see.

And though when you are blooming
Your sweetness fills the air
'Tis when you're plucked and fading
You are sweet beyond compare.

Like friends, who when around us
Though their virtues all may show,
'Tis only when they leave us
Their real worth we know.

TO A DANDELION.

AH, Dandelion yellow!
Ah, Dandelion dear!
For me you have no fellow
In all the flowery sphere.

You do not grow in choice spots,
Nor flourish under glass;
But smile in common garden plots
And gild the roadside grass.

I know you are plebeian
Your life no culture knows,
You are no blossom queen
Like the lily and the rose.

But then you look so cheerful,
I can almost hear you sing,
As you come in April tearful
The first warm tint of spring.

CLOVER BLOSSOMS.

DOES your life seem full of worry,
Do its daily cares oppress,
Is your pathway sometimes shadowed
By some passing bitterness?

Then this lesson e'en from nature
I would teach you, worried one—
Like the happy little clover
Turn your face unto the sun.

Does your trouble seem too heavy
For your weary heart to bear?
Is your pathway wholly shadowed
By some overhanging care?

Then remember, darkest objects
'Gainst the brightest lights are seen,
And for having known the dark spots
'Twill seem brighter in between.

Life is full of little shadows
Lying darkly all around,
And of course we needs must see them
If our eyes are on the ground.

A HANDFUL OF LEAVES.

THROWING some leaves in a brook one day,—
A handful of crimson autumn leaves;
And idly watching them float away
My mind a fanciful vision weaves.

I'll take each leaf for a human soul
Thrown down on the busy stream of life
And watch each one to its chosen goal
Mid the rocky channels with danger rife.

But of all the leaves save the last that fell
Floated lazily into a sheltered nook,
There to their end content to dwell
Useless alike to rock or brook.

But the smallest of them all that day,
The one that fell so far behind,
I watched it float o'er each narrow way
And through each rocky channel wind.

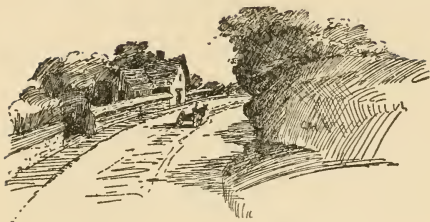
Till, torn by many a jagged end,
And cut by many a sharpened stone,
Its way to a mossy bank did wend
Where at last in peace it laid it down.

And in the spring when the snows are gone,
And the moss springs up with fresher hue,
We will bless the leaf that struggled on
From whose sweet dust its beauty grew.

We would not chide the leaves in the brook
That sought their lives in peace to spend,
But nobler far was the leaf that took
The troublesome way to a useful end.

A BIRD CALL.

THERE is a bird that calls to me
Throughout the live-long day,
A plaintive little melody
That plainly seems to say—
Hark! Listen! there is one
That's singing now afar—
"You are too late, you are too late,
You are too late, you are."
I wonder what bygone event
In its bird history
Gave cause for such a sad lament,
That breathes of mystery.
I wonder why through all the day
It should reiterate—
Hark! there is one that's singing now
"You are too late, too late"
And as it doth chirp unto me
With sweet bird-like persistence
It wakens up a memory
That to an echo listens.
Which like the bird doth seem to sing
That same, sad, plaintive bar,
"You are too late, you are too late,
You are too late, you are."



A DUAL TONGUE.

THE English think they hear it say,
Near and shrill, and far away,
Far and faint, and near and shrill,—
“Whip, Poor Will, Whip Poor Will.”

The Frenchman listens at his door
Hark! 'tis singing now once more!
In purest French it seems to be
“Bois Pourri, Bois Pourri!”

Oh wily bird so politic!
Thou knowest such a clever trick,
Methinks thou knowest too,
Of course 'twould never do

In Canada, to sing thy lay
In English, while across the way,
The Frenchman listens too.
As premier thou wouldst do.

A VALLEY.

A VALLEY where a river flows
And wild sweet flowers bloom
And every living thing has joy,
And peace, and room.

Where wide and sunny meadows reach
All odorous 'neath the sky,
While folded round in purple rims
The encircling mountains lie.

I saw it all as I passed by
And carried it away
To lull the fret of city strife,
And warm the winter's day.

STRENGTH.

I SAW the tiny petal of a rose
Torn by a passing breath of air;
But held by thread invisible
It hung rotating there.
A storm was brewing.
In the sky.
Like leaden chariots
The clouds rolled by.
Then nature held her breath
And for a space
Each leaf in terror
Turned its face.
'Twas past, fell havoc reigned!
Upon the ground lay giant trees!
I turned, and still I saw
That little flower rotating in the breeze.

THE LANDLORD.

TO own some land, all by thyself!
To have each tree and stone
Hold thee as overlord
And for their rental dues
Pay thee with beauty, rest and peace!
And all the sweet green reaches of the wood
Make pictures for thine eye,
And music for thy soul
So that it is a goodly rent
They pay to thee in toll.

A LULLABY.

THE waves are lapping on the shore
In rhythmed cadence, soft and low,
One by one they come and go,
One by one they ebb and flow.
A lullaby they're singing
Unto the setting sun.
And all the peace of eventide,
And all of nature's sweet refrain,
Fall back upon my heart again;
And resting there in sweetest strain
A lullaby keep singing;
A lullaby to pain.

MISSISQUOI IN JUNE.

O H! fair art thou Missisquoi
In the smiling June time light
When the fields are full of clover
And daisied armies white.

When shines the little buttercup
Along the roadside way,
Where happy in their innocence
The little children play.

And fair art thou, Missisquoi
When the mystic twilight fills
All the air with dimmest shadows
Lying soft o'er vale and hills.

Like the stealthy scouts of darkness
Sent to find the night a place
Where in ambush it may hide it
'Til the sun resumes the chase.

Oh! fair are thou, Missisquoi
In the scented month of June,
And my heart to thee in memory
Will beat a pleasant tune.

A MESSAGE.

“SOMEWHERE there’s rest,” I hear it
When unto my weary mind
Comes the message soft, and gentle,
In the murmur of the wind.
When every throbbing heart beat
Jars upon some tensioned string,
And the phantom of the darkness
Haunteth still awakening.
When the tireless flute of memory
Pipeth all in minor keys
Dwelling longest on the saddest
Making mournful melodies.
Even then with whisper gentle,
In the murmur of the sea,
Or the glimmer of the moonlight,
Comes this message unto me,
“Somewhere there’s rest.”

TWILIGHT.

A YELLOW light is in the north,
A light that glows to red,
A paler moon through broken clouds
Shines faintly overhead.
The birds from out the neighboring trees
Their good night message call,
Upon my heart the benison
Of twilight peace doth fall.
And as I drink the beauty in
A wish comes unto me
That as the closing of this day
May my life's closing be.
A mellow glow within my heart,
The glow of love for all
The shining of my little light
E'en though through clouds it fall.

A DIMPLE.

A DIMPLE on a woman's face should be
Like sunshine on a rose,
Which with every passing breath
Gently trembles, fades and goes.

POWER.

ROAR on proud ocean!
Dash thyself against thy crags,
Bellow forth thy fierce emotion,
Tear thyself in foaming rags!
Mighty thou art, and grand,
But a Mightier than thou there is
Who holds thee as in the hollow of His hand.

THE NEREID'S DANCE.

*(Amphitrite singing)**(Song.)*

COME my maidens, come ye Nereids,
Hasten when I call!
Now we'll step a merry movement,
Trip it one and all.

Sea-weed wreathings be your garlands,
Sea-foam drops your gems,
For the brows of Doris' daughters
Fitting diadems.

Come, ye dainty, dallying creatures!
Haste ye lithesome maids!
(Not the sunbeams dancing
Lighter fleck Aegean glades)

Unto Nature's tuneful music
Shall we dance today
Hark! the waves are beating time
Let Aeolus play!

(They dance.)

Heigh-ho, merry, heigh-ho!

Now we're ready, off we go!

Who shall stop a Nereid's pleasure

When the hour is ripe?

All together, keep the measure

While the winds do pipe!

Heigh-ho, merry, heigh-ho!

Naught shall stay us,

Waves obey us,

The Present all is ours,

And we lay upon the Future

Hands that rob her of her stores.

Heigh-ho, merry, heigh-ho!

Now the Sun has sought his pillow

The sleepy waves beat low.

And the tired zephyrs

Sighing, cease to blow.

Come ye dainty, dallying creatures,

Hasten back with me

Ere the shadows wholly falling

Cloud the Aegean Sea.

THE MAID OF THE MIST.

O H, mariner upon the sea
Beware, beware!

She's blind this night

Who guideth thee.

Her long damp hair

Streams like a banner

Far behind.

Her face is fair, but oh, beware!

She's blind, she's blind!

The bells are ringing on the shore,

The bells may ring, but nevermore

Shalt thou thy native country reach,

Save thy dead body by the tide

Be cast upon the beach,

If thou this night shalt guided be

By the fair spirit of the mist.

For oh, beware! she's blind, she's blind

Who guideth thee!

THE OLD LOG HUT.

VACANT the doorway,
Rotted the floor,
Gone all the glass
Where the wind blows through.
Sunk in a bed
Of long, lank grass,
Wet all day with the morning dew.

Giant pines shelter it,
Maple trees shade it,
Little birds sing to it
Many a song.
Who was it fashioned it,
Planned it and made it,
Building so perfect, so straight, and so strong?

Falling nuts pelt it
As though they felt it
A pity to see it
So sad and alone,
Wanton winds fling through it
Wing through it, sing through it
Hoping their company sweet may atone.

Who was it planned it,
 Fashioned it, scanned it?
Placed those old rafters?—
 So brown and so true,
Clouds of smoke hung in it,
 Lullabys sung in it,
Soothed Young America, long years ago.

Who was it lived in it,
 Loved in it, died in it?
Oh, all the memories
 Around this old hut!
They seethe in it, wreathe in it
 Breathe in it, hide in it
Making alive a past that is not.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

I LOOKED on a deep bow window
While the moonbeams glinted in,
Painting the sleeping flowers
With a brightness soft and dim.

Their shadows are lying before them,
Like the hours that are past and dead.
The brightness so mingled with darkness
One hardly knows when it is fled.

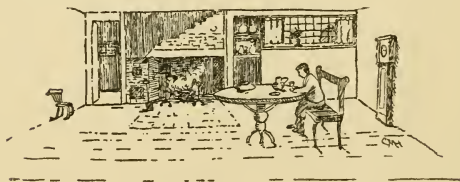
So the moonbeams and shadows, they teach us,
Though sorrow and trouble are ours,
That the brightness will mingle with darkness
As well with us as with flowers.



AN OLD NEW HAMPSHIRE INN.

OLD stone fences mark the way,
Tumbled down and rough and gray,
Efforts of another day.
Door stones mark the entrance where
Formerly good warmth and cheer
Welcomed weary travellers here.
Three great chimneys built of brick,—
Wide, and generous, and thick,
Former haunts of old St. Nick,
Now are lying on the ground,
Scattered widely all around.
Where the wild sweet flowers abound.
Degenerated apple trees
Murmur sadly in the breeze
Of other days than these,
When ruddy children sampled too,
Throwing old away for new,
Just indeed as now we do.
This old well!—What waters clear
For man and beast were drawn up here,
Away back many a year.

Inside stronger waters flowed
For those wanderers on the road,
But I'm sure they weren't as good
As this crystal shining spring
Free to all for the asking,
Leaving in its wake no sting.
And this bunch of lilac trees!
Marks the garden boundaries,
Once so full of flowers like these,
Purple mountains gird it round.
Wild deer browse on nearby ground.
Where the partridge tame is found.
Roadways leading off unseen
Covered up in boundless green
Once were highways not so mean.
Poor old caravansary!
Nothing much is left of thee
Thou art but a memory!



THE STORM SIGNAL.

WHAT means this low unceasing moan,—
This never changing monotone,
That falls from the waters, storm presaging,
Ere yet the stormy battle's raging?

Meaneth it only that waves in breaking
Over the stones this wail are making?
Or doth it mean that up from the deep,
Come the spirit voices of those who sleep?

Sleep, ah yes! but no rest have they,
Drifted by current and eddy away;
For awhile they lie in some shelly groove
Then on with the current again they move.

And ever when the storm is nigh
They send aloft this mournful cry,
A warning for some their lives to save,
But a knell for others who find their grave.

S'CONSET.

SWEET lanes that lead to nowhere,
Quaint streets that guide to naught.
Cow paths that wandering go where
The moors are beauty fraught.

With golden rod, and aster,
With mist, and purple haze,
And time goes fast and faster
Through the happy "S'conset" days.



A FANCY OF MINE.

(Song.)

WAS it only a fancy of mine,
Was it only a fancy of mine?
That as I walked in a garden fair
A little bird that was singing there
Sang, "Twit a wee, I love thee"
"Twit a wee, do you love me?"
But hush, don't tell
For 'twas only a fancy of mine.

Was it only a fancy of mine,
Was it only a fancy of mine?
That as I walked by the shining lake
The little waves o'er the stones that break
Sang, "I love you, do you love me,
I love you, do you love me?"
But hush! don't tell
For 'twas only a fancy of mine.

Was it only a fancy of mine,
Was it only a fancy of mine?
That as I walked in the garden fair
That somebody else who was walking there
Said, "I love you, do you love me?
I love you, do you love me?"
But I'll not tell, no, I'll not tell,
For it wasn't a fancy of mine.

THE PATH THROUGH THE WOOD.

THE highway may be straight and wide
That leads right to the town
And I be late and far from home
As the setting sun goes down.

But though it may be farther round,
And longer than it should,
I can't help going home that way
Down the pathway through the wood.

For there I brush the leaves aside
That rustle as I walk,
And there the garrulous chipmunk
Confides to me his talk.

The tall straight trees stand sentinel
To guard me on my way,
And the little birds foregather
At the closing in of day.

Many a woodsy secret
They tell me as I stroll,
And it's wonderful the things I hear
That are soothing to my soul.

And though the highway is more direct,
And go that way I should
I'm sure to choose that little path
That leads me through the wood.

FLOWER GOSSIP.

THE Hare bell sped with the news afar,
The Jonquil wrote it up.
The Day's-Eye spied it and hurried away
To fill the Butter cup.

The Buttercup full to the brim sped on
To tell the Dandelion,
Who roared it forth in the boldest way
To his friend the Columbine.

She straightway carried it along,
As a proper Columbine ought,
To a nice little friend she met that day,
Who was called Forget-me-not.

She remembered it all and more,
For a friend who had the blues
Lobelia by name, and a nice little flower
Who was shocked at the terrible news.

Nevertheless she took it on
To a neighbor, the Hollyhock
Who started out to seek a friend
And found 'twas Four O'Clock.

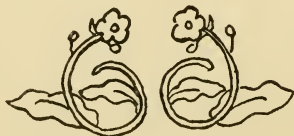
The Star of Bethlehem shed her light
Where the deadly Nightshade fell,
Who whispered it forth in a blighting tone
That chilled the sweet Bluebell.

She shivered but tolled the news forthwith,
To confessor true Monkshood
Who inflicted a penance on all the flowers
As a proper confessor should.

The Canterbury Bell rang out
To call them all to mass.
While Jack-in-the-pulpit made himself clear
That things were at a bad pass.

Now what was the gossip that all these flowers
Were worried so much about?
They said that the Rose and the Lily
From the straight path had fallen out.

And what was more
No flower that blows
Was as frail as the Lily
Nor as full as the Rose.



THE DUSK.

THE stealthy Dusk creeps down apace
In velvet stockinged feet.
The noiseless shadows fall away
Like soldiers in retreat.

The hillside slides into the plain,
The plain into the sea,
And all the world falls back in space,
A hollow harmony.

I stand upon the brink and gaze
Far down, where out of sight,
The solid things I knew by day
Are melted, in the night.

A SUMMER NIGHT.

THE sun has fallen from the sky,
The signals of the dark, unfurled,
Shake out their pennants there on high
And trail like kite strings, o'er the world.

A myriad tapers flash and leap
Before Jehovah's altar vast.
I catch the breath of flowers asleep,
Like incense, swinging past.

The great heart of the darkness throbs
And pulsates with tremendous stroke.
The mystery of my being robs
My senses of their sense, I choke

And strangle with the food for thought,
The scintillating stars display.
The unknown things around are not
The tangibilities of day.

The why, the how, the where, the when,
I leave them all, Oh God, to Thee!
Just give me my lost youth again
And all it might have meant to me!

Thy heaven they say is simply love,
A thing we neither see nor grasp,
So those bright things so far above
More real are than things we clasp.

If love is God, and God is love;
Then heaven submerged in love must be.
Oh, spare a little from above
To knit this lower world to Thee!

We reason round in circles wide,
We swing far out beyond our ground,
But our momentum fully tried
Come back with sure rebound.

The orbit of our circle true
Will surely hold us in our place,
These little journeys out from You
But make us long to see Thy face.

A MEADOW.

(At Widewood.)

I LOVE a meadow
When the grass is long
And every tiny thing
Can sing its little song.
I love a meadow
When the grass is cut
Though every tiny
Throat be shut.
When all the clover
Blossoms gay
Lie trampled 'neath
The scented hay.
I love a meadow
Where its reaches wide
Beckon me on
To scenes untried
Where I'm repaid
As the hill dips down,
Disclosing farms
And woods, and town.
I love a meadow
On the hilltop too,
Whose summit gained
Unfolds a view
That stretches wide
Like the "Promised Land"

Before the Israelites,
Where I stand.
I love a meadow
When the twilight falls
And from the dusk
The brown thrush calls
To his mate upon
The neighboring hill
Who answers with note
Antiphonal.
And heaven would be
To me I think
That grove beyond
Where the thirsty drink
In a crystal spring,
Whose waters clear
Through shimmering sand,
Bubble all the year.
And where the song
Of old maple trees
Croons me to sleep
In the summer breeze.

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OVER SEAS

WESTERN skies may fairer be
And reach in a higher dome;
But there are no skies, like the skies to me,
That bend o'er my childhood's home.
They tempted me forth with their tales of gold
And joy in a land so new,
But the ache in my heart can never be told
For my country, to which I am true.
My children's children may wave the flag
That floats o'er the land of the free;
But my old flag while there's left a rag
Is banner enough for me.
It takes more generations than one
To water the blood of a Celt,
And though I may bask in a warmer sun
My fondness for home will not melt.
I stand on the shore and watch the track
Of the vessels, that call to me,
To follow the track of their salt spray back
To my home far over the sea.



REMINISCENCE.

THE perfume of a flower,
That's wafted on the breeze,
Brings back another hour
With unknown subtleties.

That moan, that's in the wind,
Like cry of anguished thing,
Or hopeless one who's sinned
Beyond all pardoning,

Stirs unplumbed depths of soul,
Pre-natal histories,
Whose echoes round me roll
In unsolved mysteries.

Some accent, sudden, nigh,
Wakes slumberings of pain,
Like restless infant's cry,
That will not hush again.

A bird note on the air
Wrings soundless sobs from me,
And still hands everywhere
Strike chords of memory.

And many a spirit takes
Our earthways, from above,
To soothe some heart, that breaks,
With memories of love.

MY FOREST QUEEN

MY FOREST QUEEN

O H Nature, grand are all thy works!
 The ocean where the monster lurks,
 And powerful currents run.
 The mountain, with its heights sublime,
 And snow-clad points, that e'en from time,
 Have glistened neath the sun.

The river and the desert main,
 The valley, and the fertile plain,
 That food for all out-pourest.
 All these are great and wonderful,
 Each do I love, but over all,
 I love the verdant forest.

Its shady depths and vistas green,
 Its mossy nooks, where ne'er I ween,
 A shy sunbeam would venture.
 Its swaying boughs, and grand old trees,
 Its never-ceasing melodies,
 From leaf and stream and creature.

Here a sweet flower in wildness blows,
 And there a tiny brooklet flows
 Known only by its singing.
 Between a moss clad limb reclines,
 And up above the clambering vines,
 To branch and bough are clinging.

And here aside some leaves we turn,
To find the airy lady fern,

That hides in wild nooks flowery.
And there a bolder kind, beyond,
That opens out with feather frond
In verdant, bell-like glory.

No dreadful depths to terrorize,
No awful heights that meet the skies
And show man all his smallness.
But fairy dells, and rounded knolls,
And birds that pay their forest tolls
In carols full of sweetness.

And I should love thee, forest glades.
'Twas 'mid thy cool and grassy shades
That I first met My Queen.
It chanced one day in idle mind,
Weary of work and all mankind,
I lingered in thy green.

The sun, far westward in its flight,
Shed o'er the earth that mellow light
At close of day.
A breaking twig, and someone there;
Then looking up, a picture fair,
Before my vision lay.

Between me and the crimsoning west
A girlish form, in light robe dressed,
Unconsciously did stand.
Her graceful sun crowned head was bent
And on the ground her eyes intent
Saw me not near at hand.

Something she sought without success,
For with a gesture of distress
She quickly searched the ground.
And as she turned she raised her eyes,
And looked in mine with sweet surprise
As though she were spell bound.

Fearful of frightening her, I broke
The silence then, and spoke
And asked what she would find.
A girlish blush o'er spread her face
And with a shy and childlike grace
She answered "Sir, you're kind!"

So taking this for full consent
My eyes and searching powers I lent
To find her missing ring.
Her mother's wedding ring she said
And from her mother long since dead
She owned no other thing.

As she talked I studied her
And wondered that a child so fair,
 For little more she seemed,
Should be in such poor garb arrayed,
Coarse was her gown and roughly made;
 But all her face redeemed.

Her eyes, in color, gentian blue
Just when that flower is drenched with dew,
 By curling jet seemed guarded.
Her hair a molten, copperous gold
In soft, caressing waves unrolled
 Around a snow-white forehead.

The sweet, shy mouth was somewhat sad,
As though through all her life she had
 Some secret sorrow carried.
Each feature some fresh tribute paid,
And each and all a fair shrine made
 Where I would fain have tarried.

Full often I had trod that road
To linger idly in the wood,
 And rest amid its green;
But I would go more often now
And with another aim I trow,
 To find My Forest Queen.

Three days passed by, of busy care,
Such as men know who working, share
 A lawyer's hard vocation.
But on the fourth, the court adjourned,
Toward the wood I fondly turned
 In happy expectation.

Perhaps I'd meet her on the way,
Or to that pleasant glade I'd stray
 And find her searching there;
As when the sunbeams gilding fell
O'er leaf and flower o'er glade and dell
 And made her e'en more fair.

But no one met me on the road
And through the path and in the wood
 A whispering silence reigned.
Still on I trod full hopefully,
Followed the track, but fearfully
 The little clearing gained.

Was this the house I'd seen before,
Was this the sheltering, opening door,
 That now stood strongly locked?
No curling smoke arose on high,
And no footsteps approaching nigh
 Responded when I knocked.

And she was gone, my wildwood flower!
My love so beauteous, that an hour
 Had stolen my man's heart.
If I had only asked her name,
Or who she was or whence she came,
 Before we had to part!

Then turning back I paced the way
That coming had seemed all so gay,
 But now was dull as night.
For when the heart is full of hope
All Nature sings, when sad we grope
 Through life, though all be bright.

At last I reached that pleasant glade
In which I met the little maid
 And helped her in her search.
And thinking here 'twould be less pain
To know her gone I sat again,
 Beneath an aged birch.

Glancing sadly on the ground
My eye was caught by something round,
 A little, shining thing.
So this was what we sought that day,
And now when she was far away
 I found her missing ring.

Oh, bitter irony of fate,
That tells us when it's all too late,
 The words we should have spoken!
Or gives to one who prizes not,
The treasure that another sought,
 Like this small, rounded token.

But I did prize thee little ring
And I did love thee precious thing
 Because of thy possessor.
Something to have that she had worn,
Something to touch that did adorn
 And clingingly caress her.

Then holding it up to the light
I saw within the circlet bright
 Engraved an Irish name.
Her mother's name, no doubt, Eileen
And if her mother's, then my queen
 Might too be called the same.

And ever with that fair young face
My memory kept a sacred place
 For that sweet, Irish sound.
Its music filled my lonely heart
And in my thoughts it took a part
 As each new day came round.

But days came round and weeks went by,
And though I searched both low and high
 No trace of her I found.
She'd vanished from my longing sight
As darkness flees before the light
 Or dew sinks in the ground.

But hope dies hard when love's the goal,
And something whispered to my soul
 That we should meet again .
So shaking off my restlessness
I gave my mind to business
 And mingled more with men.

For work's the best of all the cures,
For all the woes, which man endures
 That cometh from the heart.
The busy hand or active brain
Will often give a balm to pain
 That nought else could impart.

And so I struggled hard for fame
And safely built myself a name
 On Fortune's favored road.
Until at last it almost seemed
So full my life I must have dreamed
 That forest episode.

But dream or not I had the ring
And kept it as a cherished thing
While six full years did run.
Six years that brought me wealth and power
And many a pleasant, happy hour;
But no hour dear as one.

One that I spent with a fair maid
'Mid whispering leaves, and forest shade,
And golden sunlight sheen.
One that I never can forget
Whose memory sweet lives with me yet
Though years have gone between.

And many another maid I've met
Who well could wear a coronet,
Or grace a royal throne.
Beauties who favored me with smiles
With gentle arts, and maiden guiles
And e'en not maids alone.

For matrons too oft smiled on me
And thought a pleasant thing 'twould be
To call me son, perchance,
Not for myself, but for my gold
Which in their minds, though left untold
My worth did much enhance.

One there was a woman true
Whose hand, and even heart I knew
 I might have won with ease.
She seemed to like me for myself
And not for rank, nor sordid pelf,
 But e'en she could not please.

Sometimes I thought it was to be,
That she was very dear to me
 And my lost queen dethroned.
Whose beauty had, from absence, grown
Until at last through years it shone
 With brightness never owned.

'Twas thus I reasoned with my heart
Until cold reason had in part
 Though not quite conquered love;
But might have save for her dear ring;
That little golden, shining thing
 Which all my heart did move.

For when I felt it in my hand
It seemed to me a golden band
 Between me and Eileen,
And brought to me all fresh again
The love that I had first felt, when,
 Her fair young face I'd seen.

So I put the thought aside
Of ever winning other bride
 Than the owner of the ring,
And if I ne'er should meet with her
Still would my heart her memory wear
 As its most precious thing.

Now that those six years have flown
I find myself, strange and alone,
 On England's sea-girt strand.
For I have left my boyhood's home
And hence in search of health have come
 To roam through many a land.

First I linger with a friend,
Whom I have met, where Cornwall's End,
 Stands out to sea so far.
Then together we depart
For England's busy, throbbing heart
 Where 'souls, by millions are.

Where wealth keeps up its revels high,
While poverty slinks vicious by
 In starving irony.
Where stone work towers over head
That towered there when martyrs bled
 From sovereign tyranny.

Buildings whose gloomy massiveness
Make me feel all my littleness
As never felt before.
Thinking of all the countless souls
Who passed them by for earthly goals
That know them now no more.

Men in their day, much more than I
And yet forgotten all they lie
As dust when the wind endeth.
Perchance a few to memory cling,
Who by brave deed, or evil thing,
A page to history lendeth.

But London has another side,
Its cheerful parks, and pleasant Ride,
Its noted Rotten Row,
Where beauty loves to sun itself,
And where poor pride, and low born pelf,
Together come and go.

And here it is one pleasant day
My friend and I both take our way,
To spend an idle hour.
And while we watch the shifting scene
Two riders swiftly pass between,
And one I've seen before.

At first I do not know her face
 Though on my heart its matchless grace
 Seems graven deep and clear.
 Puzzling over it in vain
 My glance rests on a golden chain,
 And a ring hanging there.

Then clear, as leafless branches show
 Against the sunset's golden glow,
 A scene comes back to me.
 A scene within a forest glade
 A sinking sun, a fair young maid
 And an old birchen tree.

I seem to hear the birds again
 Trill out their joy as they did then,
 For life so glad and free.
 I seem to feel the self same joy;
 But with it mingles this alloy.
 How can I know 'tis she?

So fast she rode, had it not been
 For my old friend, I had not seen
 The swiftly passing pair.
 But he had seen them first and said
 "Here comes the noble Lord Gontred
 And his grand daughter fair."

How could it be, that stately girl
The one I knew, and he an earl
 Who rode past by her side?
It seems impossible and yet
I have the ring, and e'en by that
 I'll prove if memory lied.

I've found the house, a stately place
And at a window see a face,
 The same and yet 'tis not.
The eyes and head and shining hair
All but the mouth, just as they were
 In that fair forest spot!

The lips that then looked shy and sweet,
Now in proud hauteur firmly meet,
 With a slight touch of scorn.
As though she found the world unfair
And discontentedly did wear
 The lot where she was born.

The pompous servant ushers me
With most profound solemnity
 Into a stately room.
Presently I hear a sound,
A silken rustle on the ground,
 Soft footsteps and she's come.

She stops halfway between the door,
And bows, and then looks on the floor
 In haughty silence waiting.
I ask her pardon if I'm wrong
And tell my mission, and how long
 I've had the little ring.

The haughty look deserts her lips
The blue eyes fill, and then she steps
 And takes the ring from me,
And holding it with trembling hand
Examines close the little band,
 Her mother's name to see.

I stand and study her again
As I did years ago, but then
 She was almost a child.
And now her costly draperies fall
Around a woman, queenly tall,
 And all my hopes seem wild.

What chance have I to win her love?
So high she seems, so far above
 My new world, self won rank.
But sad thoughts flee before her smile
And then we sit and talk awhile
 And she my care would thank.

I, who cannot tell her all
Just pass it by and ask to call
 Again, some other day.
She little knows how loath to part
I am, nor how my happy foolish heart
 Beats music on my way.

What need to tell how oft we meet,
At home, abroad and on the street,
 Or riding in the row.
One day she tells me all that passed
Between this time and that, when last
 We met six years ago.

How she had lived in that green wood
With her grandsire in solitude
 Save for a maiden aunt.
They were her mother's kin, and she
Brought up with them from infancy
 No other friends did want.

Her grandsire was an Irishman
And hated as the Irish can
 All English noblemen.
He had two daughters, one so fair
She won the heart of Gontred's heir,
 Who was in Ireland then.

She was the darling of his heart,
His baby girl, who had in part
 Atoned her mother's loss,
And he was loath to give Eileen
To Gontred's son whose rank had been
 To him the heaviest cross.

Eight years of poverty and care
The young pair lovingly did share
 When Eileen's father died.
And not long after she was left
Of all a mother's care bereft
 Who faded from her side.

The poor old father's bitter grief
In baby Eileen found relief,
 Who grew up almost wild,
And after years the Lord Gontred
Lonely in the life he led
 Sent for the winsome child.

Perhaps he felt remorse at last
And thought to make up for the past
 By caring for Eileen.
The Irishman declared the earl
Should never have the little girl,
 And left his home unseen.

He wandered here, and wandered there
Forever haunted by the fear

That he should lose the child.
Until at last they crossed the sea
And after years were found by me
In that fair forest wild,

And, so it seems he thought that I
Must be some clever English spy
Who'd found them out at last.
And taking all his little store
Wandered from place to place once more
As he had in the past.

But soon enfeebled by his years
He lost in part his brooding fears
And sought his native land.
Gontred soon found that they were there
And anxious still to claim his heir
Held out a friendly hand.

Eileen would not leave him then
Whose love for her had ever been
The truest and the best.
And nursed him with the tenderest care
Until the old man journeyed, where
All wanderers are at rest.

Disliking her aunt's means to share
She took the home was offered her
Mid London's stately halls.
But used to all a gypsy's life,
The rooms with costly treasures rife
To her were prison walls.

She chafed beneath the formal rule
Of London life, whose only school
Had Nature's lessons been.
And held aloof from revels, where,
Had she but wished, she was so fair
She might have reigned as queen.

All this worried Lord Gontred
Who wanted his grand child to wed
Someone of noble name.
She did not tell all this to me
But I who watched them both could see
What went and came.

I knew the old lord hated me,
I read it in his eyes when he
Saw me near Eileen.
She told him I was an old friend
And he could scarce his courtesy bend
His strong dislike to screen.

One day, when she was out, he said,
That his grand child was soon to wed
A man of her own choice.
And in insulting manner, did
My visits to the house forbid,
When we both heard a voice.

'Twas Eileen who had just returned
And seeing me so rudely spurned
She stood between the two,
With flashing eye and quiet tone
And haughty air that matched his own
She said it was not true.

He, enraged at being foiled,
Over with fuming passion boiled
And bade her choose between
Me and him, with all his land.
One look she gave, I clasped her hand
She'd chosen me, My Queen.



“YOUR FATHER’S A BRAVE”

THE CHILDREN'S BOOK

THE HOLE IN THE FENCE.

JUST a picket or two,
Left off for our use.
There was scarcely a day
That we did not go through.
Our friendship was very intense;
Got acquainted that way—
Through the hole in the fence.
She always wore plaid,
With a yoke and full skirt,
(I remember just how we dressed)
My style wasn't bad;
Gabrielle with a frill
But some way or other
As children all will
I used to like hers the best.
We aped "Lady ways"—
Wore rhubarb sunshades
And burdock leaf fans.
(They were good enough those days)
Called on each other
With much of pretense
And a great deal of state,
Through the hole in the fence.
Now we go around by the gate

Leave our cards, have a "day,"

Go to parties full dress

And come home very late.

Have arrived, as they say,

At years of good sense,

But life isn't half that it was

When we played

Through the hole in the fence.

1890.



GRIMM AND GRUFF.

GRIMM and Gruff
Were good dogs enough,
But horribly given to fighting.
Grimm came out flat
For chasing the cat
And Gruff had a habit of biting.

• No matter what spat
They were busy at,
No matter what bone discussing,
Let a cat show her nose
Or tread on their toes,
And whew! they were off and fussing.

Now one Pussy Mew,
Who was fond of the two,
And strange it is what I'm recounting:
Took liberties great
Were it early or late,
Almost to danger amounting.

She'd sleep on the rug
With each little pug,
No matter what the weather.
And eat from one dish
As sweet as you'd wish;
So happy all together.

Now one day they saw
Under pussie's front paw
A bundle of soft grey fur,
And more that seemed
Unless they dreamed
A family had come to her.

Now what more fitting
Such friends unremitting
Should call with congratulation.
So each little pug
With a happy "mug"
Started off with great elation.

Now it was one thing for kit,
When she saw fit
To have lived with each dog as a brother;
But a different tale
Which turned her pale
When she'd become a mother.

Her back rose up
Like a reversed cup
Her eyes blazed balls of fire,
Her temper rose, and rose, and rose
And rose, and rose
Up higher.

She bit poor Grimm
Till he cried for him
Enough, enough, enough!
And clawed and scratched
Till almost despatched,
That poor old doggie, Gruff.

The two slunk off
With a bark and a cough,
Never to call any more.
With such manners, they said
She had better be dead
And her temper they did deplore.



THE STRAIGHT LINE.

“KEEP to the straight line,”
My mother used to say,
When I was but a small child
And used to write that way.

“Keep to the straight line,”
I tried with honest might
But the letters would go crooked
And the words not go quite right.

It's not as easy as it seems
Nor as simple as it looks
When walking down the paths of life
Or filling copy-books.

But 'tis well to have a straight line
And keep it well in sight,
Though the lines may still go crooked
And the words not look quite right.

FOLLOW CAT.

SHE used to play so nice with me
When we were all alone,
And let me be
The mother
And things I liked the best,
Like pour the tea,
And all the rest.
And she'd be baby
And cry nice
And let me pet her so;
But in a trice
Before you'd know
When Susie Jones came in
She'd sniff her nose
And point her chin
And look just like a bear
And act like that
And say to me
"Go home, go home,
You 'Follow Cat.'"
Then Susie Jones
Would stick her tongue out
Most a mile
And they would whisper so
And smile,
And when I'd try to follow them

And wonder why
They'd act like that,
They'd both call out
"I wouldn't be a 'Follow Cat.'"
Then I would run into the house
And cry, and cry, and cry,
And wish that I was awful sick
So that I most could die,
And make them sad
And sorry too.
Of course she was much more growed up
Than me.
And it was awful good of her
To let me have the bestest cup
And let me pour the tea.
So when she would
Come in at night
And say, "Why, Sis,
What makes you cry?
You look just like
A great big fright,"
And give me *such a kiss*,
And be as sweet as pie,
Why I'd just blame
That Susie Jones
For it always happened that
When she came in, they'd run off so
And call me "Follow Cat."

THE BOLD RAT.

A BAD cat
Met a rat
In a downtown flat.
"Scat!" said the cat.
"Drat!" said the rat
"I will not do that."
"Spit! Spat!"
Said the cat.
"My hat!"
Said the rat,
And hit her a bat.
Then they fought and fought,
Till the day was done,
And nothing was left
Of either one.

SHINNY.

A GAME we played when we were boys,
With all its bluster and its noise,
As men, a game we have outgrown
And yet, methinks, it could be shown
There are some we play at even yet
If to its pattern closely set
In many points would coincide;
But now, as then, we oft forget
To "Shinny on your own side."

We cannot call it out so bold,
The rules are different that hold
The order of the game man plays;
And fairness judged from youthful ways
Has lost its old control.
Riches the ball and self the goal,
We follow after far and wide
Regardless now where'er it roll,
To "Shinny on your own side."

There's much we cast off with our youth
'Twould better be if kept forsooth,
As boyish games on larger plan
Are but the pastime of the man.
'Tis different now at "Shinny" when
With boys we play who've grown to men;
By boyhood's rules no longer tied,
'Tis harder now than it was then
To "Shinny on your own side."

THE CASH GIRL.

ALL day long,
On their little feet,
Trot, trot, trot,
Some untidy, some of them neat,
Hot, hot, hot,
While outside the broiling street
Blisters the air
Where they chance to meet,
To catch a breath,
Ere the strident call—
“Cash, cash, cash,”
Shall summon all.
They seem too young
For the task imposed,
They are too tired
Ere the shop is closed,
They grow too old
While they still are young,
They grow too bold
With a saucy tongue,
Who was so foolish
To place them here?
Surely to someone
They must have been dear;

Ah! The grind for bread
Is a hard, hard grind,
They have to be fed
And their food they must find,
So all day long on their little feet
Trot, trot, trot;
Some untidy, some of them neat,
They scamper and push
And struggle and call
As they answer the summons
That hurries all.
So all day long on their little feet
The cash girls scamper
And push and run,
No time for mischief
Or play or fun,
Just to be glad
When the day is done.

WHIP BEHIND.

I HEAR them calling on the street,
Their voices carried by the wind,
Small boys who grudge another's treat,
"Whip behind!" "Whip behind!"

And with the words and with the wind,
A thought doth into being start,
How down the path of life we find
Boys older grown to play their part.

How eager ever man to call
When unto others luck's inclined,
(Jealous of good that may befall)
"Whip behind!" "Whip behind!"

Ah! easier far our way might be
If all those tongues we could but bind,
Which for themselves call fruitlessly,
"Whip behind!" "Whip behind!"

DON'T TOUCH.

THERE are so many things about
I like so very, very much,
And yet my mother says to me,
"Don't touch, don't touch."

I wonder why they leave them here
To tease me so, when they are such
Delightful things, then say to me,
"Don't touch, don't touch."

But father says it's just the same
Though he is grown up ever so much.
That there are many things he likes
He mustn't dare to even touch.

It's my big mother says to me
That I'm not to handle such,
But he says it's a "wee small voice"
That says to him he mustn't touch.

So I suppose it's best for us
Not to handle and have no choice;
But isn't it queer when he's so big
That he should hear so small a voice?

It seems to me that things are turned
All upside down since I came here,
And if I only knew the way
I'd go right back, this very year.

I'm sure up there they'd never have
A lot of stuff we'd like so much,
All lying round, and then cry out—
"Don't touch, don't touch."

POOR LITTLE THING.

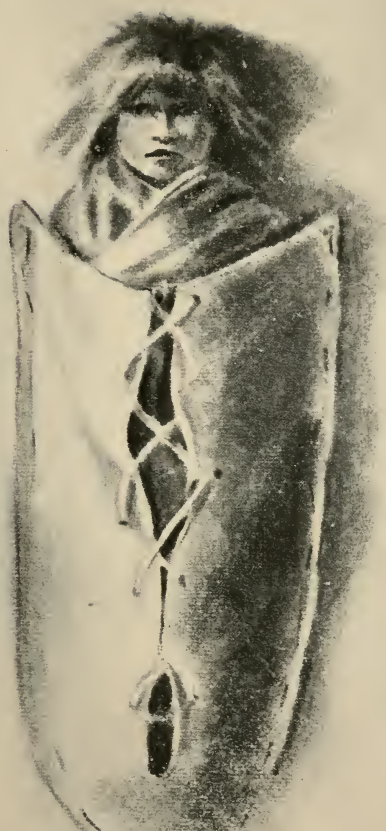
YOU look like a mouse that is caught in a trap
Or a bird that is clipped in the wing
And I wonder just how when you're taking a nap
You manage, you poor little thing.

Can your toes rub together as baby toes will?
Can you not give them a fling?
Must you forever be resting so still
And cramped, you poor little thing?

Your body is plump and your cheeks are as fat
As a prairie bird shot on the wing.
And I'm sure I'd no reason to christen you that
And call you "A poor little thing."

Your moss bag is broidered with beads that are bright,
The Lake of the Woods had no tree
Too grand in its beauty, too great in its height
To be felled and shapen for thee.

Your father's a brave, your mother for you
Croons sweet an Indian song,
As she binds the ribs of her staunch canoe
Or paddles it swift along.



A Natural Impression
from a Native of the Woods
C. M. H. 1860

And after a while when you're leashed from your bands

 Your back shall be supple and straight.

Strong shall your arms be and your hands,

 Powerful your muscle and great.

Free as a bird, where you will you may go.

 Your dominions are fit for a king.

And I'm sure I'd no reason to christen you so,

 And call you "A poor little thing."

CHICKS.

THE chickens strut about the yard
"Cock A Doodle Doo."

They pick the crumbs up fast and hard,
And so indeed would you,
If you were just a nice fat hen
With nothing else to do.





COMMON THINGS.

SOME must be beggars,
And some must be kings,
But only the looker, it is, who sees
The beauty that lies in common things.

Have you noticed the form of the common weed,
That grows in the wayside dirt?
Have you seen the sparrow, that dullest bird,
Twitter, and preen, and flirt?

Have you lain with your face on a summer day
Turned down to the meadow grass,
To watch the tribes of that underworld
As they struggle and seethe, and pass?

Have you studied the haunts of the busy ant
As it fetches and carries and saves?
The Egyptians building the pyramids
Were not more active slaves.

I have seen a chipmunk, with babies two,
Exploring an old stone fence.
With what motherly patience she urged them along,
On one and another pretence!

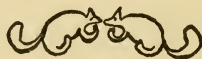
When they came to a crevice, so big to them,
And shrank from its edges rude,
How she chattered, and gabbled, and coaxed them on,
With a mother's solicitude!

I have seen two parents, mud-turtles, they were
With their brood, on a log in the sun.
And when they saw me in a language unknown,
They called "Duck." And they did, every one.

I was not flattered as you may think,
To know I frightened them so;
But 'tis wonderful how much common sense
A common mud-turtle can show.

It would have been nice for some little boy
To have kept them at home in a pail;
But they preferred the beautiful lake
And so every one turned tail.

I have not told half the things I have seen
In this underworld looking glass;
But 'tis well to have eyes in the back of your head
For these common things that you pass.



A PICTURE.

WHAT is this on the window pane?
A bunny rabbit as plain as plain!
It seems to be nibbling the pretty grass
That grows so tall on the window glass.
The artist who painted it seems to be lost,
But I have my suspicions 'twas old Jack Frost.

BILLY.

LITTLE Billy went to school.
Didn't follow any rule.
Got there just as he would strike it,
Sometimes would walk it, sometimes bike it;
But his teachers didn't like it:
Set the girls to tittering, giggling
And the boys to snickering, wriggling.
That was why they called him silly.
Just because his name was Billy
And because when he would come
He would sit and suck his thumb.
Sit there winking, blinking, blinking,
They didn't know that he was thinking.
Now they all have grown up big.
Billy wears a gown and wig.
Doesn't follow any rule
Any more than when at school.
Blinks no more than others do,
Had his eyes attended to.
'Twas with his eyes he did the blinking
But 'twas with brain he did the thinking.

THREE GIFTS.

THREE piggies sought their fortunes"
A nursery tale retold in verse.
It might be told better
And might be told worse.

Mother Nature spoke up
To three sons one day
As they started forth
On life's bleak highway.
I have three gifts.
Which one most endures?
Just make your choice
And the gift is yours.
The eldest called out
In a voice so bold
And said "Dear Mother,
I'll take the gold."
So on with his heavy
Pack he rolled.
It kept him down
To the dusty row,
It blinded his eyes
With its glittering glow.
It kept him from knowing
His friend from his foe.

The second spoke up
When his mother came
With her gifts, and said
"Just give me fame."
And he rose like a bird
And travelled far
To the lands of delight
Where the famous are.
Then she came to the last
Her baby boy,
Her pride and delight,
Her greatest joy.
"My son," she said,
"I have nought for you
But this bundle of words,
With no choice you drew
The gift of all gifts,
If you use them, true."
The weight was light
As he stepped away;
But he sang a tune
As he went that day.
He whistled and trilled
A roundelay.
He picked his words
From his bundle light,
And joined them together
From day to night.

He wove them in patterns
Of quaintest design,
And strung them in couplets
Line on line.
He chose them with care,
And puzzled them out,
Twisted them in
And turned them about
And though they were light
When he started along
They soon grew quite rich,
With the weight of his song.
He shook them together
Like dice in his brain
To see what new wonders
Might greet him again,
And though he could never
Their value have told.
They brought him both glory
And plenty of gold,
And the words that he dropped
As he trod on his way
Leave a trail of delight
For all travellers to-day;
And a shining chain links us
Like stringlet of pearls,
Though he long has been travelling
More glorious worlds.

THE NIGHT AFTER CHRISTMAS.

'T WAS the night after Christmas
And all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse.
Mamma in her kerchief,
Papa in his cap
Were settling themselves
For a Night-Mary nap.
The children all tired out,
Were tucked up in bed
With a pain in the tummy
And one in the head.
Old Nick with delight,
And I don't mean the saint,
Was entering more names
In his book of complaint,
For intemperance he said
Is not just what we drink,
But the food that we eat
And the things that we think.
And Christmas was never intended to be,
Just a jolly, old, rollicking sort of a spree.

THREE YEARS OLD

SWEET as sugar,
Merry as fun,
Bright as a cricket
This little one.
Playing with scissors
Needle or knife,
Burning his fingers,
Risking his life,
Telling a story,
Singing a song,
From this to that thing
The whole day long.
But we wouldn't change him
For angel or gold.
This dear little mischief,
Just three years old.

THE EXTRA HANDED CRAB
AND OTHER STRANGE THINGS

DEAR me! What would we do
If the houses took to grinning?
I'd be sure to lose my head
And up a tree go "skinning."

To meet the household broom
As I went out to walk,
In the middle of the room,
Gave me such a shock.

It stood there quite alone,
Like our grandma's silken dress,
I nearly turned to stone,
A little more, or less.

And then there's what they call
The wrong side of the bed.
I'd push it to the wall
And have just one instead.

It is a dreadful loss
When we get up that way.
It makes us tired and cross
All through that dreadful day.

It is an awful age
When things inanimate
Can walk, and grin, and rage,
At such a dreadful rate.

Once upon the rug
Oh my! I felt so queer!
I saw a horrid bug
That grinned, from ear to ear.

I knew an apple tree,
That blossomed in the fall.
If I, so slow, should be
I would not grow at all.

The very worst I know
Was a crab with extra hands.
One day I thought I'd go
Out strolling on the sands.

I took it for thin air
Out walking on two legs.
I thought it wouldn't care
So knocked it off its "pegs."

Its eyes stuck out with fright
A quarter of an inch,
But it pushed them in quite tight
With two tiny hands. "A cinch."

They were a special pair
Crossed beneath its chin,
For using when it had a scare
To push its eyeballs in.

I'd heard of eyes that stuck
Right, straight, out of one's head.
So wasn't it the greatest luck
To meet that crab, we said.

I saw a heap of snow
They showed to each new comer,
It didn't know enough to go
Although 'twas then mid-summer.

I suppose the next we'll hear
Is that animals can talk,
But if they do I fear
Right off this earth I'll walk.

PUSSY'S FATE.

I HEARD a mouse at midnight stealing
Down the oaken stair
I heard a kit itself concealing
To catch a treat so rare.
Then pitter patter, pitter patter,
Down the oaken stair
Frisky frisking, whisky whisking,
Went that cautious pair.
I heard no more, I heard no more,
So dropped me off to sleep.
Next morn when I descended
For poor mousie took a peep,
And there in the corner sittin'
Was the mouse to a huge rat grown,
While nought was left of poor kitten
But an eye tooth and wish bone.
So now my little readers,
A moral I'd relate
When you would like to play the cat,
Just mews on Pussy's fate.

THE COUNTRY OF LOOK-INTO-THINGS

THERE'S a land that I know,
And it's not very far,
Where there's much to be seen
But where travellers are
Inclined to go through
With their eyes shut.
There is much to be seen
And there's more to be thought,
We will just take a journey
Our tickets are bought,
Through the country
Of Look-into-things.
Here's a blot on my paper
That fell from my pen,
I wonder just what
I was writing at then?
Perhaps 'twas a sketch of the war,
For the blot is a soldier
As plain as can be
With only one arm,
And, oh dear me!
How terribly sad he is looking.
His thoughts on his troubles
Seem all to be set.

Perhaps on a pension

He never may get

For serving so well in the war.

And here is a milk jug

Of quaintest design

With a bas-relief pattern

So daintily fine

You are sure to ask if its Wedgewood?

'Twas formed from a milk drop

That fell from a glass

And isn't it wondrous

Congealed it should pass

To the shape of a beautiful pitcher?

A piece of old paper

That somebody tore

I see in its edge

As it lies on the floor

The face of a Psyche

Or Milo.

Now I'm sorry to leave you,

But have to go home,

Though I'm sure by yourselves

You often will roam

Through the country

Of Look-into-things.

A LITTLE FLY.

A LITTLE fly on a window pane,
That was buzzing away
With might and main,
Stopped all at once and sadly said,
“’Twill soon be winter,
And I’ll be dead.
So what’s the use of buzzing like this
My work, I’m sure,
No one will miss.”
Then off to a quiet spot she went
To idly rest
Till her life was spent.
But a spider who watched her
As she slept
Closer and closer
Softly crept.
Till a dainty cage of silken net
All around her
Was safely set.
And long ere winter
That poor little fly
Found out alas,
What it meant to die.

Now you see, if the fly
At her work had kept

The spider could never
So near have crept.

So if all you can do is just to buzz
Why, buzz and buzz and buzz and buzz.

NELL AND LOU

'T WAS the work of two small maidens,
Pretty Nell and dainty Lou,
To pick all the ripened currants
That on Grandma's bushes grew.

For several years they had done it
And had always done it well,
So with interest one fine day,
They heard their Grandpa tell

How the worms on the currant bushes
Were just beginning to show
And he must have them "hellebored,"
So that the fruit might grow.

Said Nell, "Oh, please dear Grandpa,
Let them eat the leaves all up
And then 'twill be so easy
To fill the big tin cup."

But Grandpa only muttered,
As old folks often will,
"Tut, tut, my little maidens,"
And so the two kept still.

That evening in the garden
Two little maidens strolled,
And put two heads together,
Which makes just one, I'm told.

Said Lou, "They are so horrid,"
Said Nell, "They wriggle so,
And even when they're hellebored
They don't all die, you know."

Why here's a bush they've eaten at
And nibbled up the worst,
And I'm sure they are the currants
That are ripening the first."

A few days after grandpa
Came in in such a state
To say the worms had beaten
And the sprinkling was too late.

"There's scarce, if you'd believe it,"
To Grandma, "A leaf upon a tree."
Then two small two-legged worms
Felt just as mean as mean could be.

Said Nellie to her mutton sleeve,
"I wish we didn't do it."
Thumped Louie's heart into her ear,
"I told you you would rue it."

Then with a pretty lisp,
A stammer and a cough,
"Oh, pleathe, dear grandmama," she said,
" 'Twuth uth who picked them off."

And grandma crossly grumbled
"You naughty little Lou,
They'll be as sour as vinegar,
And take more sugar too."

"Yeth, but grandma dear,
They won't take *tho* much more,
And what you lothe on sugar,
You'll thave on hellebore."

Then grandma only muttered,
As old folks often will,
"Tut, tut, my little maidens,"
And so the two kept still.

LITTLE GIRLS.

LITTLE girls who like to climb
Should chose most likely places,
For if they don't they're apt to fall
And scratch their little faces.

A LITTLE MAN.

To R.

THERE is a little man called Rolf
When he grows up big
He'll go outdoors
And play at golf.

Like to play at football, too,
And let his hair grow long,
Mother'll let him do all those things
If he won't do things that are wrong.

Like to go into the back yard
Throw the stones at cats,
Throw sticks at the little boys
And knock off all their hats.

Like to go into the forest,
Climbing up the trees,
Wearing off his stockings
Scratching off his knees.

Like to go into the water,
Try to learn to swim,
Mother'll let him do all those things
Though she'll be afraid for him.

A LITTLE LADY.

To E.

IT isn't that she's dressed so neat
Or always looks so fresh and sweet:
It isn't that she's round and fair,
With such blue eyes and pretty hair.
All of these things of course I see.
It's her manner that appeals to me.

She never sits when grown ups stand,
And always offers the proper hand.
She tries to think, not to slam the door,
Nor to leave her playthings on the floor
And though these things all right may be
It's her manner that appeals to me.

It isn't that she'd never stare,
Nor rudely say she "Didn't care"
Nor take the biggest piece of cake,
Nor sit too late up, wide awake
Nor speak too loud, nor cry, nor call.
It's her manner that's the best of all.

So modest, gentle, childish, sweet!
You'd almost think you'd like to eat
Her right up, like a great big bear;
But that of course would not be fair.
It's the manner that appeals to me
Of this little chubby, sweet, ladye.

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